

GOP REP. DUNCAN DISSENTS ■ SAVING WESTERN CIV

SEPTEMBER 13, 2004

The American Conservative



**Repetition Doesn't
Make It True...**

DON'T BLAME THE LEFT

I'm one of those "progressive peaceniks" referred to by Thomas E. Woods Jr. (Aug. 2). Though I agree with Mr. Woods that both Democratic and Republican administrations have engaged in imperialist behavior, the idea that "American imperialism is, at its roots, a left-wing disorder rather than a conservative impulse" is dubious at best. To demonstrate his theory, Mr. Woods properly begins his examination of American imperialism with the Spanish-American war and our occupation of the Philippines. However, he inexplicably leaves out the fact that the president who led us into that war was the Republican William McKinley.

I suppose one could argue that McKinley was not a true conservative, but was Lyndon Johnson a progressive? I don't think you would find many on the Left in sympathy with that idea. I marched against the wars in both Vietnam and Iraq and don't remember any conservative contingents in those marches. From Eugene Debs in World War I to Chomsky, Zinn, and other leftist thinkers today, progressives have generally been in front of the anti-imperialist campaigns in the past century.

The origin of the imperial impulse is not "conservative" or "liberal." The main drivers are power and material gain. The PNAC blueprint for U.S. global hegemony is unlikely to be praised by progressives (or true conservatives for that matter).

BOB KELLY

Jefferson, Maine

Thomas Woods replies:

Mr. Kelly's point that we should not neglect non-ideological motives for imperialism is well taken. The point of my essay was simply to insert a bit of nuance into the impression given by talk radio: that skepticism about the Iraq War is just another example of liberals' traditional squeamishness about war.

Not only does this simplistic scenario permit neoconservatives to avoid addressing conservative opponents of the Iraq War, I argued, but it isn't even historically accurate: the vast bulk of the American Left supported American entry into World War I, as well as many other American military adventures down to the present. In recent weeks we have heard more and more calls from liberals for American intervention in Sudan. What better confirmation of my thesis?

Part of the problem, as Mr. Kelly suggests, is the partly semantic and partly philosophical question of who is a "real" conservative or a "real" liberal. No doubt Lyndon Johnson was a political opportunist who had no principles, but if we cannot identify as a man of the Left someone who revolutionized American society with his civil-rights legislation and Great Society welfare programs, then words have lost their meaning.

GHOST TOWN

Being a good conservative, I felt quite "compassionate" while reading Bill Kauffman's Wal-Mart piece (Aug. 2). I was literally in tears. The same thing that happened to Carr's is happening to every store in our town. Shawano, Wis. is a town of about 7,900 people, most of whom now flock to the outer realms of town to imbibe "lower prices." When my children were smaller, we walked downtown, three blocks away, shopping, having a doughnut at the local bakery, reading the newspaper, talking, and saving the world with the senior members of the town. Now nearly all the stores are gone, replaced first by K-Mart and within a couple of years by Wal-Mart, then Super Wal-Mart. The businesses that these customers are bypassing for "falling" prices are the friends, former classmates, neighbors in this community. Pretty soon all America will be a strip mall of cheap products, poor working conditions, and owners who

transfer the daily take from our community by midnight everyday.

MART GRAMS

Shawano, Wis.

GOOD FORM

I do not consider myself conservative or liberal, just a citizen trying to stay informed. Some of your viewpoints I agree with and many I oppose. However, one thing I can say is I find you both informative and reliable, and your style pleasant and entertaining. In the truest sense of liberty and freedom, I thank you for being available. I find your non-debasing style a pleasant relief from the shrillness and personal attacks of most major publications and other supposedly open forums.

SCOTT R. RITENOUR

via e-mail

A WORLD AWAY

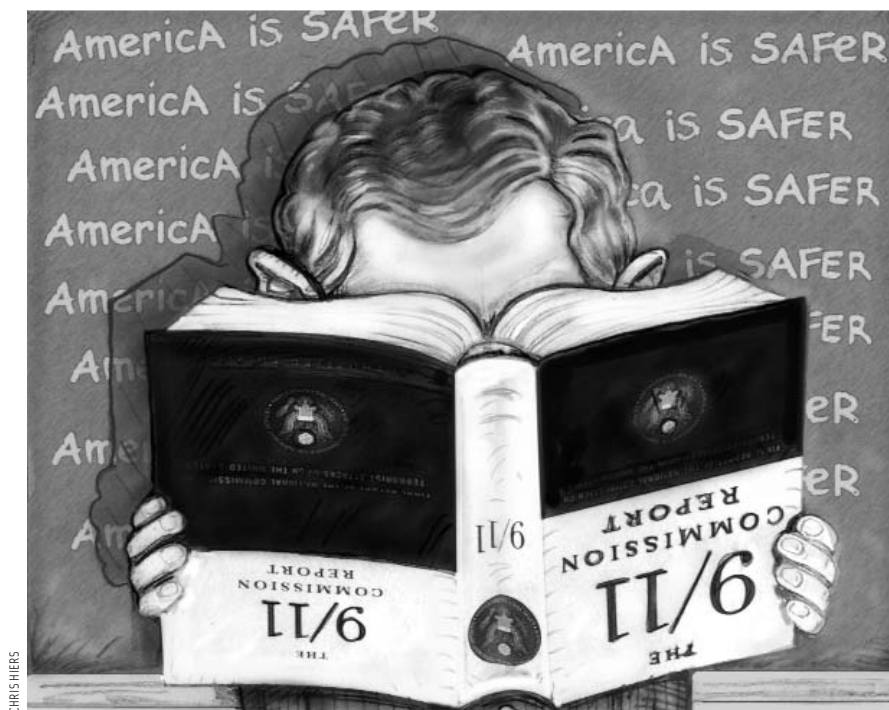
Fred Reed's "Innocents at Home" (July 19) perfectly illustrates the arrogance of the self-styled world traveler. Just what do you learn from a bunch of Europeans in an "unheated shack" in Bolivia? Do you learn about Bolivia or about fashionable Europeans?

Have some humility, Mr. Reed. Don't confuse entertainment with the serious gathering of knowledge. Maybe Bush, Rice, and "Rumsnamara" should have canned the CIA briefs and done their planning in "a remote bar on stilts," but understand that there are many ways of gaining usable insights, ephemeral though they are. And don't be so smug as to think that a vacation makes you ready for the cockpit. It is a childish conceit and nothing more.

BILL WINKLER

New Hope, Pa.

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CHRIS HIERS

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[CULTURE]

FEMINIST IN FATIGUES

Surely it is a picture that deserves to be included in "The Album of America," a small moment offering a brief glimpse of a much larger truth. The image, variations of which have appeared recently in any number of newspapers, is of Private Lynndie England, U.S. Army, veteran of the war in Iraq. It shows the unmarried England, a pert "Army-of-One" beret cocked over one eye, her swollen body neatly swathed in maternity battledress, entering a military courtroom at Fort Bragg, N.C. She is attending a hearing convened to consider whether she should stand trial for what are, in effect, war crimes.

Private England is a central figure in the Abu Ghraib prison scandal. If found guilty of prisoner abuse and the other offenses with which she is charged, she will richly deserve whatever punishment the court hands down. Whatever the responsibility of those higher in the chain of command, there can be no excusing the sordid misconduct of American soldiers. But if Private England is the poster girl of Abu Ghraib, she qualifies in another sense as a poster girl of our time.

Ours is a revolutionary age, enamored with the notion that completing humankind's long journey to perfect freedom requires only that we shed old constraints. From the overthrow of convention—above all in matters related to gender and sexuality, extending of late even to foreign policy—comes liberation and beyond liberation waits utopia.

So Lynndie England apparently believed and so she has lived her life. By age 21, she had married, divorced, and gotten herself pregnant by a comrade-in-arms (and co-defendant). When it came to showing she was just "one of the guys," England pulled out all the stops: her fellow soldiers have testified in court to her promiscuity and barracks-



MIKE LESTER www.caglecartoons.com

room vulgarity. All the world has seen the documentation of her penchant for sadistic brutality. As Katti Gray writes in *Newsday*, Lynndie England testifies eloquently to "how far women have come in their quest to prove we can do almost anything a man can do." Indeed.

But before the jaws of military justice close and Private England vanishes from sight, let us pause briefly to mark her fate: roadkill on the freedom trail and testament to our delusions.

—Andrew J. Bacevich

[BELTWAY]

BLOOD & TREASURE

It's not always just ideological zealotry that motivates the neocons' incessant warmongering. Consider James Woolsey, former Clinton CIA director and for years a major tub-thumper for an American war against Saddam Hussein. Woolsey was one of the chief Washington sponsors of Ahmad Chalabi, the Iraqi émigré fraudster who disseminated info about Saddam's "weapons of mass destruction." After 9/11, Woolsey was all over the airwaves hyping ties between Saddam and al-Qaeda that turned out not to exist.

The *LA Times* recently published an illuminating story about the financial dealings of Woolsey's wife, Suzanne,

trustee of a defense consulting group with Pentagon connections and recently appointed as a director of the Fluor Corp. Soon after she came on board, Fluor won \$1.6 billion in Iraq reconstruction contracts. Husband Jim is a veep of Booz Allen, recipient of a \$75 million telecommunications contract in Iraq. Woolsey is also a director of the Paladin Homeland Security Fund.

While this all may be legal, it raises vital ethical issues. As Steve Clemons's blog thewashingtonnote.com aptly puts it: "big inappropriate lines get crossed when individuals help fan wars, in which people die, and financially benefit from the results. A recusal from war profits should be standard for talking heads when it comes to sending American men and women into harm's way." You can bet that the young Marines who are coming home wounded from Najaf won't be raking in the kind of big bucks that are coming Mr. and Mrs. Woolsey's way.

[ELECTION]

KERRY-ING ON

It was a tailor-made "benefit of hindsight" moment. After 932 American dead, \$200 billion spent, our global reputation tattered, and Iraq still in chaos, Sen. John Kerry could have recast him-

self as the opposition candidate that strategy, if not conviction, would have recommended back when he voted for Bush's war. With it now clear that Iraq posed no threat to the U.S. and that the costs far outweigh the president's press releases, a savvy challenger would have rushed to the nearest podium for an "If I knew then what I know now ..." speech.

Not John Kerry, who grinds on unencumbered by the nimbleness that characterizes better politicians. The line that he would have done the same war, only better, doesn't sell. (Does anyone really believe that his winning ways could have resurrected the impressive coalition of the first Gulf War?) The country's sizeable antiwar contingent is still searching for a candidate, and he could have made a belated bid for their votes.

Past electoral lunacy, Kerry's assertion that he would again vote to authorize the war betrays a troubling personal trait. If, after it all, we've managed only to depose a dictator who couldn't have menaced America even if he so desired, either a long list of other countries qualify for "liberation" or the enterprise was a failure. Unwillingness to analyze the evidence and admit as much suggests not captaincy that looks to those lined behind but disqualifying arrogance.

[POLITICS]

AMNESTY OPPONENTS NEED NOT APPLY

After numerous well-publicized yet fruitless overtures to prospective candidates, the Illinois GOP has finally settled on a nominee for U.S. Senate, albeit one imported from Maryland.

While Alan Keyes will surely add oratorical fireworks to the Senate campaign, one wonders why Illinois Republicans found it necessary to conduct a national search in order to fill the ballot line. Surely the most logical reaction when scandal forced Jim Ryan out of the

race would have been to turn to the candidate who had finished second in the primary.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert explained to a local newspaper why this solution was unacceptable to party bosses: runner-up Jim Oberweis had taken a strong stand against illegal immigration and the Bush amnesty proposal. Hastert stated that if Oberweis "ever wants a future" he should "sit out a time, for his own good." It's awfully sporting of the speaker to feign such concern, but it would be much better if he and the Republican establishment genuinely cared about curtailing illegal immigration. Instead they go to great lengths, reaching beyond state boundaries, to pass over candidates who care about enforcing the law.

[PUNDITRY]

BLAME AMERICANS FIRST

National Review Online diarist David Frum has had another of his brainstorms. Maybe the problem with our intelligence capabilities is not the agencies. Maybe it is not even the policymakers. The problem, he muses, may well be the American people.

If this idea had come from a politician, it would be a novel way of passing the buck. Frum suggests that government officials have been too risk-averse and too slow to act because we have made them afraid to make mistakes: "they feared alienating world opinion and offending and upsetting the voters ... they didn't act because they weren't sure that the public wanted them to act."

Presumably, a more intelligence-savvy public would demonstrate a greater willingness to embrace wars to "end evil" in the Middle East. No word on how Frum proposes to resolve this conundrum, unless he has been reading Bertolt Brecht: perhaps the government should "dissolve the people and elect another." ■

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The Retreat of Empire

When U.S. Marines were ordered to withdraw from Fallujah last April, I titled my column "Fallujah: High Tide of American Empire." For the pullback meant that

America was either unwilling to take the casualties to crush the Sunni resistance in Fallujah or unwilling to pay the price of Arab rage if they won a bloody battle.

Whatever the motive of the generals in ceding Fallujah, it was a retreat. The Islamic world saw it as such. Since then, fighting in the Sunni Triangle, Sadr City, Najaf, and the Shia cities of the south has escalated.

When Baghdad fell, Gen. John Abizaid estimated the number of enemy insurgents at about 5,000. After a year in which thousands of the enemy have been killed or captured, estimates of the number of insurgents have been raised to 20,000. Rumsfeld's query has been answered: we are creating more enemies than we are killing.

Without more American troops and more years of fighting, we will not win this war. We can only stave off defeat.

Now President Bush has announced he is pulling 70,000 troops out of Europe and Asia over ten years and bringing most of them home, though some may be reassigned to Eastern Europe or Central Asia.

Why the redeployment? Because of grumbling in the ranks and on the home front over too many tours of duty too far from home.

As has been written here before, we are not an imperial people. We do not have the will or perseverance for empire. We have no desire to rule other nations. Now the "white man's burden" is beginning to weigh on our military and imperil the re-election of a president

who, at the instigation of the neocons, has foolishly committed American power and wealth to some enterprise called "the world democratic revolution."

Reality has begun to intrude on the reveries of America's elite. With the United States now dependent on imports for over half our oil consumption, the price has shot up to \$45 and \$46 a barrel. Putin's smashing of the Yukos oil cartel, guerrilla attacks on Iraqi pipelines, turmoil in Venezuela, and tensions with Iran seem certain to keep it in that vicinity.

The \$55.8 billion June trade deficit points to a deficit for 2004 of \$670 billion, with a deficit in traded goods of over \$700 billion. No nation can sustain trade deficits of 6 percent or 7 percent of GDP.

Who is financing them? China, Japan, and the nations of East Asia who are lending America the dollars to buy their goods, so Asia can steadily enlarge its share of U.S. markets it is stealing from U.S. producers. Even a falling dollar has failed to rein in these soaring deficits. We are consuming more than ever. But less and less are the goods we consume produced in the USA.

Not only are we borrowing 6 percent of GDP to finance our trade deficit, we are borrowing another 4 percent to finance a budget deficit estimated at \$440 billion. You cannot run an empire on borrowed money. Just ask the cousins who bankrupted themselves fighting world wars and maintaining the world's

largest empire until it came crashing down after 1945. We, their creditors, inherited the estate.

But there are reasons other than economic that it makes sense to roll up the American empire and bring the troops home. North Korea now has nuclear weapons. U.S. forces on the DMZ are now less a deterrent to war or a spear point to liberate North Korea than hostages against U.S. pre-emptive strikes on Pyongyang's nuclear facilities. And with Kim Jong Il brandishing nukes, the day cannot be too far off when South Korea and Japan realize that their security and immunity to nuclear blackmail require that they, too, join the club. In a world of proliferating nuclear weapons, invading armies are less instruments to intimidate than inviting targets. No nuclear nation ever had its homeland invaded. If Iran, too, becomes a nuclear nation, Bush Doctrine threats of U.S. pre-emptive strikes will ring hollow, and the mullahs know it.

The only objection to Bush's redeployment is that he did not order all the divisions back home now. There is nothing in Eastern Europe vital to U.S. security. As for Central Asia and the Gulf, there is only oil and, at \$45 a barrel, everybody over there from mullahs to monarchs is happy to sell it to us. All we need over there is a navy over the horizon to enable us to open up the Gulf to shipping should some regime seek to shut it down.

Looking at America's vital interests—defense of the homeland, freedom of navigation to Europe and Asia, keeping the Gulf open, being able to retaliate by air or sea to attacks upon us—what is the need for all these bases on foreign soil that serve as magnets to terrorists and incitements to anti-Americans? ■

[right with the world]

Misreading the 9/11 Report

Victory in the War on Terror depends less on homeland security than global collaboration.

By Paul W. Schroeder

THE 9/11 COMMISSION REPORT draws praise for valid reasons. But the remarkable plaudits, publicity, and sales it has garnered do not prove that it has been correctly understood. The public discussion of the report in fact suggests that Americans are missing its central point and purpose.

This results in part from the report's virtues. The thorough, well-documented, and often gripping description of the events surrounding 9/11 tends to focus attention on what are essentially historical questions of causes and responsibilities, while the report's main purpose is to make recommendations for the future. Even more important, its penetrating analyses of the failures and inadequacies in America's counterterrorist system before 9/11 and its proposals for reforming that system tend to reinforce perceptions already dominant. America is now the frontline in the anti-terrorist struggle and that the central battle involves keeping Americans safe from further attack, primarily by improving security at home and carrying the fight to the terrorists by military action and intelligence work elsewhere. The administration naturally promotes this perception, believing it yields an electoral advantage, and Democrats, not daring really to challenge it, only contend that they could wage the battle better.

No one could complain about this perception and its likely electoral consequences if it were correct. If the report

actually confirmed that the American homeland constituted the main battleground in the so-called War on Terror, then the verdict of "safer but not yet safe" endorsed by the administration would be reasonable. (I say "so-called" because this "war" consists of two distinct though connected things: a real if unconventional war against particular terrorists and their organizations and a wider non-military struggle against terrorism in general in favor of a decent civil society. Why this distinction is crucial will become clear later.)

In fact, the report says something different. It demonstrates clearly if indirectly in its narrative and analysis and directly in its conclusions that the struggle against terrorism is not centered in America. It is essentially global, therefore any strategy that concentrates on homeland security, military action, and counterterrorist intelligence and policing while neglecting the foreign-policy aspects of the struggle will fail. Repeatedly it stresses how much international organization, communication, financial activity, travel, training, and recruitment went into the planning and execution of the 9/11 attacks. Time and again it emphasizes how those terrorist strikes and others were connected to wider issues of international politics, economics, religion, and society. Constantly it points out the transnational nature and reach of terrorist organizations.

The most important recommenda-

tions of the book, ignored in the public discussion, come near the end in Chapter 12, significantly entitled, "What to Do? A Global Strategy." These recommendations start from the clear recognition that even though the United States is al-Qaeda's avowed prime enemy, and America's homeland has become an important target for terrorist attacks, the central front lies elsewhere—Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Arabian Peninsula and nearby East Africa, Southeast Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines, West Africa, and European cities with large Muslim populations. (Iraq is mentioned only in passing, with the remark that it would go to the head of the list were it to become a failed state.) The report goes on to argue that the main task of finding and destroying the terrorist networks must be done by local governments and forces that the U.S. cannot command but can only aid and persuade. Success depends on active co-operation from friends and at least noninterference or partial help from neutrals and opponents.

Even more crucial advice, real dynamite expressed in calm factual prose, comes in Section 12:3, entitled "Prevent the Continued Growth of Islamist Terrorism." Note the ominous verdict implied in that title and backed by a quotation from Donald Rumsfeld: since 9/11, despite three years of American effort and two wars, Islamist terrorism has continued to grow. Even more star-

ting admissions follow: the U.S. needs a long-range strategy giving foreign policy as much attention as the military and intelligence aspects of the struggle and does not have one; American engagement in the Muslim world is both deep and resented; throughout the Muslim world “support for the United States has plummeted”; our task is to “help defeat an ideology, not just a group of people, and we must do so under difficult circumstances”; and most arresting, “among the large majority of Arabs and Muslims . . . we must encourage reform, freedom, democracy, and opportunity, even though our own promotion of these messages is limited in its effectiveness simply because we are its carriers.”

These statements do not represent new revelations. They are commonplace, supported almost daily by ongoing developments. Their importance lies in their devastating indictment—within an expert, moderate, bipartisan report—of the existing policy on combating terrorism and in their call for radical change.

THE UNITED STATES NEEDS BUT DOES NOT HAVE A **LONG-RANGE STRATEGY** THAT RECOGNIZES THE **CENTRALITY OF FOREIGN POLICY**.

This report says that the United States needs but does not have a long-range strategy that recognizes the centrality of foreign policy. In the vital global struggle with the terrorists over ideas, influence, allegiance, recruitment of followers, and commitment, we are losing. Our world influence and image have deteriorated so badly that measures we need others to take for our mutual benefit become less likely simply because we urge them. A more decisive verdict of policy failure is hard to imagine.

The report does not discuss what caused this deterioration in our world position. That was not its mandate. It

does offer advice on what might be done to reverse it, but the suggestions are, understandably, rather general, sometimes amounting to little more than restatement of the problem. One point about the actions proposed to help prevent the continued growth of Islamist terrorism is, however, significant: they are all international, that is, they represent things that the United States cannot do without help and in many instances cannot do as a prime actor or mover at all—actions it can only encourage others to do, restricting itself to paying for them, giving them international legitimacy, and sometimes just getting out of the way and concealing its role.

What does this reading of the report tell us about the current American discussion of it, concentrated on homeland security and intelligence reform? Indulge me in a parable.

There once was a very rich man who lived on a lavish country estate, well away from a teeming nearby city plagued by gangs, crime, poverty, and

violence. He was the richest and most powerful businessman in that area, owning extensive properties in the region and exercising a leading influence in its politics, economic activity, and society.

One day the worst gang in the city, led by a particularly dangerous thug who had earlier attacked some of the landowner's businesses, made a daring assault on his country estate, causing major damage. The landowner responded by declaring war on the gangs and promising to take the fight to their lairs in the housing complexes of the city. The first raid, enjoying the consent and support of

local authorities, many fellow businessmen, and even some residents in the complex, succeeded brilliantly. The housing complex was quickly seized, some gang members, though not the most important leaders, were killed and captured, the managers of the complex were replaced, and some order was restored. But a succeeding raid on another larger housing complex went much differently. It was not approved by the local authorities, was supported by only a few businessmen, and was condemned by almost all others in the city. Though this housing complex was also easily overrun, no evidence of gang activity could be found, the problems of occupying and running it proved unmanageable, living conditions became worse, the residents resisted, and gang members who had not been there before now filtered in.

Under pressure from his family and associates, the landowner reluctantly agreed to let an independent expert analyze the situation and advise him how best to wage his war on gangs. After careful study, the expert gave him this report: “Lax security on your estate under both the previous and the current management was one factor enabling the gang to attack it. That situation already has been improved, but not enough. I have a list of more things to do. Your main challenge, however, lies not in defending your estate but in doing something about the gangs themselves and the environment in which they live. The gang leaders are not mainly trying at this time to kill you or destroy your estate. They are trying to distract and discredit you, ruin your reputation, wreck your businesses, drive you out of the region, and isolate you on your estate—and then kill you.

“You therefore cannot win this war on gangs by yourself. The more you try this, the more you give them the war they desire. The local authorities have to do

the main job of finding these gangs and rooting them out. You can help, urge, pay, bribe, and coerce them into doing it, but beyond a certain point if you make it too dangerous to their interests and lives, they won't go along. You also need to enlist more of the other businessmen in the task, not just to help pay the costs but even more to make clear that this is not just your war. Above all, you have to get the people in the city on your side. Persuade them that the way you and your friends do business will make their lives better, that what the gang leaders promise is false.

"As of now, the local authorities do not really trust you. Your fellow businessmen have concluded that your method of fighting threatens their interests. Worst of all, people in the community, including many who work for you and used to support you, have come to see the gang leaders as Robin Hood and you as King John—so much so that if you urge them to do something, they will be less likely to do it simply because you are urging it. Unless you change your strategy, you will lose."

The wealthy landowner listened to the expert, thanked him, assured him that he would consider his recommendations carefully—and went back to concentrating on strengthening the security of his estate and finding out what new attacks the gangs might be planning.

Some weeks ago, an editor of this journal asked readers to respond to this question: what should voters who generally oppose Kerry and the Democrats and favor Bush and the Republicans on social and domestic issues, but oppose Bush on Iraq and foreign policy, do on November 2?

The differences between Bush and Kerry in personal qualities, beliefs, and abilities, though important, need not be decisive here, and the differences in their announced programs, goals, and policies for Iraq and elsewhere are notoriously

not that far apart. But this commission's analysis and recommendations call for major change on the foreign-policy side of the struggle against terrorism, and to do any good a change must be perceived as credible—not just in America but especially in other parts of the world. Re-electing Bush rules it out.

This president cannot change himself or his administration's foreign policy. That would contradict his style, character, and self-image, and overthrow his whole campaign and appeal to his base.

THIS PRESIDENT CANNOT CHANGE HIMSELF OR HIS ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY. THAT WOULD CONTRADICT HIS STYLE.

He must go on as he has, insisting in the face of every evidence of failure that things are going well, that he and America are right and good and that only evil-doers fail to see it.

Moreover, even if he could change, if by some miracle he and his whole administration underwent a road-to-Damascus conversion, it is too late. No one would believe him—and this is decisive. Hard though it is for Americans to accept, when it comes to the main front in the struggle against terrorism, it matters far less whom Americans trust to ensure their safety than whom Arabs, Muslims, Europeans, and even Asians trust enough to join in the common endeavor. On that score, the verdict is in. Like Belshazzar, Bush and his policies have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Polls, demonstrations, defections, diplomatic defeats, restlessness among allies, glee among enemies, and continued terrorist activity demonstrate a massive, almost worldwide distrust.

Where Kennedy, Reagan, and the elder Bush could be acclaimed in Germany as heroes and use that acclaim to

accomplish important ends, Bush cannot now find an audience there safe to speak to. Clinton visited Dublin and was surrounded by 100,000 cheering Irishmen. Bush could briefly visit Ireland, the most pro-American country in the world, only when surrounded by 10,000 security guards.

It does not finally matter what caused this, and how much Bush is to blame. Saying so is not attacking him personally but recognizing facts and drawing inescapable conclusions. The slogan

"Anybody but Bush" need not arise from blind Bush-hatred but from a sober appreciation of the international situation. Most of the world has reached that conclusion, and as Bush says, results matter.

The same facts that make serious change in the direction of American foreign policy impossible under Bush make it possible under Kerry. The crucial factor is not whether he is better qualified by education, experience, intellect, and temperament. It is rather that he is not burdened by the crushing baggage Bush carries—the Bush Doctrine, the open disdain for international institutions and law, the choice of preventive war, the misleading arguments for it, the botched occupation of Iraq, the stains of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Kerry already enjoys in much of the world, especially Europe, such credibility as a harbinger of change that some call for toning down the praise so as not to create a backlash in the United States.

One more thought, intended to sweeten slightly for conservatives the bitter pill: many think that voting out an incumbent president in wartime shows

national irresoluteness, even cowardice. Rationally and historically this makes no sense. It is no more a sign of weakness to change leadership in wartime if success depends on it than it is to remove a baseball pitcher who is getting shelled in order to prevent the game from becoming hopelessly lost. Switching to the elder Pitt helped Britain win the Seven Years War; switching to Churchill helped win World War II. Clinging to failed leaders and policies often contributes to disaster. Germany might have benefited in World War I by getting rid of Bethmann earlier. Exchanging Daladier for Reynaud earlier might conceivably have helped France in 1939-40. Examples could be multiplied. And this switch can be made without personal vindictiveness or betrayal of one's deep convictions and party loyalties, if a greater good and overriding need justify it. The case of Chamberlain and Churchill illustrates this. Even in 1940, Chamberlain was still more trusted by many Conservatives and Labourites than Churchill, widely seen by Conservatives as a maverick and by Labour as a warmonger. What brought Churchill to power was simply the conviction that Chamberlain, though he meant well, was unsuited to lead the war effort, while Churchill was—and once the war in Europe was over, the voters promptly kicked him out. There would be nothing dishonorable in conservatives voting for Kerry now as a necessary evil while vowing to oust him in four years.

But enough of argument—a final plea: do not let America continue to play the rich landowner in the parable. There is still ample chance to turn things around now. After four more years there may not be. ■

Paul W. Schroeder is professor emeritus of history at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is the author of The Transformation of European Politics, 1765-1848.

[apocalypse now]

Four Day War

The Iran/Israel conflagration, a history.

By Claude Salhani

A NUMBER OF ANALYSTS believe that Iran will reach a critical stage in its pursuit of nuclear capability sometime within the next few months. This is a terrifying new development, far more worrisome than the wars and uprisings that have plagued the Middle East to date.

Indeed, as Ray Takeyh, director of studies at the Near East and South Asia Center at the National Defense University, said at a recent Washington conference, Iran may have already passed the point of “political no return” in its bid for nuclear competence. If the Islamic republic has already passed that political landmark, then the actual point of no return cannot be far away.

Iran's urge to join the elite “nuclear club” has been encouraged by a number of patrons who would like to see a second Islamic nation, after Pakistan, develop a nuclear weapon to counter Israel's atomic arsenal. Takeyh believes that if Iran has not crossed the threshold, it is “awfully close.”

Stressing the Islamic republic's objective, last June Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi asked that his nation be recognized as a member of the nuclear club. “This is an irreversible path,” Kharrazi stated. He went on to reveal that his country is now able to operate the full nuclear fuel cycle. Then, in a tentative reassurance to the West, added that Iran is “not now enriching uranium.” Not yet—but intel-

ligence analysts believe it will soon begin processing this vital nuclear component.

Iran has long wanted to be recognized as a regional superpower, a desire that began under the shah, if not earlier, possibly as far back as 580 B.C. with Cyrus the Great. The country's mutation from an imperial dynasty to an Islamic theocracy did little to alter Iran's visions of regional grandeur. From their perspective, Iranians feel they have good reason to want nuclear deterrence.

First, the United States' invasion of Iraq served as a reminder to autocracies around the world of their need to be strong enough to deter potential U.S. intervention. If nothing else, Iraq's invasion served as the poster child for nuclear deterrence against unilateral military action from the world's remaining superpower. Repeated threats of regime change by the Bush administration have only increased Iran's fears that they could be next in line. President George W. Bush's campaign promise about “finishing the job,” if re-elected in November, is a slogan that must keep more than one ayatollah awake at night—and pushing for nuclear deterrence.

Immediately following the 1991 Gulf War, India's then chief of staff was asked privately what strategic lessons should be drawn from the rapid and overwhelming U.S. victory over Iraq. “Make

sure you have your own atomic bomb before you challenge the United States,” he replied.

Second, Iran cannot predict how a highly unstable Iraq—a longtime foe—will turn out once this initial post-Saddam chaotic phase passes. And third, some members of Tehran’s ruling theocracy believe that if Israel is permitted nuclear weapons, why not Iran? Being lumped into the “Axis of Evil” has helped justify a level of paranoia.

While the United States is keeping an eye on Iran’s nuclear progress, there is another country watching even more closely. Israel, feeling the most threatened by Iran’s march towards nuclear competency, is reportedly preparing a repeat of its 1981 raid on Iraq’s nuclear facility at Osirak. With about 140,000 American troops in neighboring Iraq, chances that the U.S. will intervene militarily are slim, making it all the more probable that Israel will feel it has to act unilaterally.

According to a recent report, Israel has built replicas of Iran’s nuclear facilities in the Negev Desert, where their fighter-bombers have been practicing test runs for months. Israel realizes it has a small window of opportunity if it is to take out Iran’s nuclear facilities before they go “hot” and leakage from

What follows is the unfolding of a worst-case scenario, an imaginary yet all-too-possible depiction of how events might develop if Israel were to attack Iran’s nuclear facilities.

Day One: Wednesday

In a pre-dawn raid, undisclosed numbers of Israeli warplanes, taking off from military airbases in the Negev, destroy Iran’s main nuclear facility at Bushehr. Israel’s armed forces have released no details, but it is believed the planes flew over parts of Jordan, northern Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, refueling in mid-air before reaching their target. Military analysts speculate that the planes must have refueled somewhere over Iraq.

During the one-hour raid, Iran claims to have shot down “several” Israeli fighters. Television images show pilots being lynched by furious mobs before Iranian authorities could reach them. The after-effects of the raid shake the Arab and Islamic world. Millions take to the streets demanding immediate action against Israel.

In planning the attack, Israel weighed the threats of Arab and Muslim reaction. The only other nuclear threat, and a possible danger to Israel, is Pakistan. Israel considered striking Pakistan’s nuclear

Day Two: Thursday

Believing that Israel would never undertake such actions without U.S. approval, or at least a tacit nod from the American administration, Iran retaliates. Thousands of Revolutionary Guards are dispatched across the border into Iraq with orders to inflict as many casualties on American troops as possible. Fierce clashes erupt between coalition forces and Iranians. Within hours, more than 400 U.S. troops are killed, and many more wounded in heavy fighting. Iranian sleeper agents, who have infiltrated Iraq since the downfall of Saddam, urge Iraqi Shi’ites into action. They cut major highways and harass coalition troops, preventing reinforcements from reaching units under attack. Several helicopters are shot down.

Tehran orders the Lebanese Shi’ite movement, Hezbollah, into action against northern Israel. Hezbollah launches scores of rockets and mortars against kibbutzim, towns, and settlements. Israel retaliates. Casualties are high on both sides of the frontier. Tension in the Middle East reaches a boiling point. In Washington, the Cabinet convenes in an emergency session.

Massive demonstrations erupt all over the Arab and Islamic world. Crowds of gigantic proportions take to the streets, ransacking Israeli embassies in Cairo, Amman, and Ankara. American embassies in a number of other cities are burned. With police overwhelmed, the military is called in. Armies open fire, killing hundreds, adding to the outrage.

Day Three: Friday

Following Friday prayers across the Islamic world, crowds incited by fiery sermons in mosques from Casablanca to Karachi take to the streets in the worst protests yet. Government buildings are ransacked, and clashes with security

ISRAEL HAS BUILT REPLICAS OF IRAN’S NUCLEAR FACILITIES IN THE NEGEV DESERT, WHERE THEIR FIGHTER-BOMBERS HAVE BEEN PRACTICING TEST RUNS

an attack causes harmful exposure to tens of thousands of civilians caught by radiation forced into the atmosphere by such a raid.

Israel is unlikely to accept Iran’s word that its nuclear program is meant solely for peaceful purposes and aimed at developing commercial energy. The possibility of decisive military action is, indeed, high.

sites, too, but Indian intelligence reports that Pakistan lacks long-distance delivery for its warheads. Bombay is the farthest they can reach. Additional reassurance from American intelligence convinced Israel that as long as Musharraf remains in power, Pakistan does not represent an imminent threat. The decision was made not to hit Pakistan.

forces result in greater casualties. Martial law is declared, and curfew imposed, but this fails to prevent further mayhem and rioting. Islamist groups call for the overthrow of governments and for immediate military action against Israel.

In Saudi Arabia, Islamist militants engage in open gun battles with security forces in several cities. The whereabouts of the Saudi royal family are unknown. In Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, and a dozen other countries, crowds continue to run amok, demanding war on Israel.

Day Four: Saturday

A longstanding plan to overthrow Musharraf is carried out by senior Pakistani army officers loyal to the Islamic fundamentalists and with close ties to bin Laden. The coup is carried out in utmost secrecy.

Pakistan's intelligence service, the ISI—a long-time supporter of the fundamentalists—in agreement with the plotters, takes control of the country's nuclear arsenal and its codes. Within hours, and before news of the coup leaks out, Pakistan, now run by pro-bin Laden fundamentalists, loads two nuclear weapons aboard executive Lear jets that take off

armed with false flight plans and posing as business executives, follow the flight path given to them by Israeli air traffic control. At the last moment, however, the planes veer away from the airfield, soar into the sky and dive into the outskirts of the two cities, detonating their nuclear devices in the process.

The rest of this scenario can unfold in a number of ways. Take your pick; none are encouraging.

Israel retaliates against Pakistan, killing millions in the process. Arab governments fall. Following days of violence, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt succumb to Islamist rebels who vow open warfare with Israel. The Middle East regresses into war, with the fighting claiming hundreds of thousands of lives. A much-weakened Israel, now struggling for its very survival, deploys more nuclear weapons, targeting multiple Arab capitals. The Middle East is in complete mayhem, as the United States desperately tries to arrange a cease-fire.

This was all a bad dream, or rather one writer's dark vision of what might happen if the current situation is allowed to continue unchecked. What precisely are the chances of any of this coming to

The solution is far from evident. Takeyh, the professor of national security studies, notes that in the past where there have been cases of "nuclear reversal," such as in South Africa, it has happened due to a change in the region's strategic environment.

The Middle East hardly falls into that category. Iran is unlikely to give up its nuclear deterrence as long as Israel remains a nuclear power. Israel is unlikely to cede its nuclear capability as long as it feels threatened by the Arab/Islamic world and as long as Pakistan holds on to its bomb. Pakistan, of course, points to India, also a nuclear power. India looks at Pakistan and across the Himalayas and sees nuclear-armed China and says it would never give up its cherished membership to the elite nuclear club.

In his campaign stops, President Bush keeps reiterating that the world is a safer place because of his actions. Yet looking at the state of world affairs it is very difficult to agree with him. The dead-ended Mideast peace talks, Saudi Arabia's internal turmoil, continuing Islamist terrorist threats, the vulnerability of American troops in Iraq, and the question of Iran's nukes all contribute to maintaining tensions at an all-time high.

Barring a solid and lasting peace settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbors, the countries of the Middle East are far from nuclear disarmament. If anything, nuclear proliferation is only likely to increase as states like Saudi Arabia find that they, too, need to defend themselves against a nuclear-armed Iran. Recent reports have indicated that Saudi Arabia is looking to lease Pakistan's nukes. The arms race of the Cold War may be dead, but the race for hot weapons has never been so alive. ■

Claude Salhani is foreign editor and a political analyst with United Press International in Washington.

IRAN IS UNLIKELY TO GIVE UP ITS NUCLEAR DETERRENCE AS LONG AS ISRAEL REMAINS A NUCLEAR POWER.

from a remote military airfield, headed for Tel Aviv and Ashdod. Detouring and refueling in east Africa, they approach Israel from the south. The crafts identify themselves as South African. Their tail markings match the given identification.

The two planes with their deadly cargo are flown by suicide pilots who,

pass? The probability of Israel striking Iran is very real. That could happen at any moment. As for the rest, there is really no way to know what will ensue once the demons are unleashed. Events could unfold as described above, or they could develop a bit differently, give or take a nuke or two. Whatever the outcome, it will not be good.

[point of order]

Party Crasher

One of the six GOP Congressmen to oppose the Iraq War speaks out.

By John J. Duncan Jr.

"IF I KNEW THEN what I know now about the kind of situation we would be in, I would have opposed the war." These words of *National Review* founder William F. Buckley Jr. must have shocked the neoconservatives at the White House. After all, Mr. Buckley is a man described as the "founder of the modern American Conservative movement" in a recent column by Lee Edwards.

Indeed, the reaction from on high must have been very strong because Mr. Buckley felt it necessary to write a column a few days later clarifying (really watering down) his earlier statement. He wrote that he had been accused of being disloyal to President Bush and wanted to explain why that was not so.

As one of only six Republicans in Congress who voted against the war, I, too, heard from some who felt I should have supported the president "no matter what." Most people in my East Tennessee district were surprised by my vote, and some were shocked. I explained many times in speeches, newsletters, in the media, and person-to-person that there was nothing conservative about the war in Iraq. It was going to mean massive foreign aid, huge deficit spending, and placing almost the entire burden of enforcing UN resolutions on our taxpayers and our military—all while there were better ways to remove Saddam Hussein.

At first, the only positive reactions I got were from liberals and a small minority of conservatives. Many of my longtime supporters said that they disagreed with me but that they respected or even admired my decision. A very few were angry.

Now, however, as this unnecessary war has grown increasingly unpopular, the response to my decision has become overwhelmingly positive, even from people who originally supported the invasion—and almost everyone would view my district as one of the most conservative, patriotic, pro-military in the nation.

President Bush's war advisors probably can accept criticism about Iraq from his enemies on the Left with less anger than criticism from his friends on the Right. But the president's men should reserve their ire for the neoconservatives who got him into this in the first place.

The *New Yorker* recently wrote, "Subtract Iraq from the equation, and this would be a completely different election." That sentiment holds on the Hill. Over the last several weeks, in conversations with House Republicans, I have said that the president would probably be 10 or 12 points ahead if it were not for the war in Iraq. No one has disagreed.

Let me be clear: I am supporting President Bush for re-election and will do all I can to help him. I could never support

Kerry-Edwards, the most far Left ticket ever nominated by the two major parties. President Bush is a very kind, very likeable man. With degrees from Yale and Harvard, and training as a pilot, I believe he is more intelligent than many of his very partisan critics. President Reagan used to say that if you found someone in politics you agree with 80 percent of the time, that was about as good as it could get. Even husbands and wives and best friends disagree.

In expressing my views on Iraq, I have never criticized the president, and we now know that even he had doubts as late as January 2003. In Bob Woodward's latest book, he writes that after a briefing by Deputy CIA Director John McLaughlin, the president responded, "Is that the best we've got; that will never convince Joe Public." The Congress had passed the War Resolution three months earlier, in October 2002.

Just before that vote, I was called to the White House with five other House Republicans for a briefing by Condoleezza Rice, George Tenet, and John McLaughlin, who presented most of the briefing. I assume the president received more information three months later, and apparently earlier he had not been convinced of the threat or the need to go to war in Iraq.

As far back as 1998, at a time Saddam Hussein was seldom even on the nightly news, I voted to give \$100 million to the

Iraqi opposition to help begin his removal. I felt, then and now, that it would have been far better for us to have helped fund, train, and advise the Iraqi opposition and let their people do the fighting rather than sending our kids over there to die or be maimed. One of the questions I asked at the White House was how much Saddam Hussein's military budget was in comparison to ours. The answer was 2/10 of one percent.

I voted for the first Gulf War because Hussein had invaded another country and we were told that he would probably invade others. Then I watched as his "elite" troops surrendered to CNN camera crews or even to empty tanks, and I came to believe that the threat then had been exaggerated. Hussein was weakened that much more by years of sanctions and embargoes, and by 2002, he was no real threat to us at all, as is now clear to almost everyone.

IT IS THE NEOCONSERVATIVES, NOT THE WAR'S CONSERVATIVE OPPONENTS, WHO ARE BEING UNTRUE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE OLD RIGHT.

In August of that year, Dick Arme, then our Majority Leader in the House, said, "I don't believe that America will justifiably make an unprovoked attack on another nation. It would not be consistent with what we have been as a nation. My own view would be to let him bluster, let him rant and rave all he wants and let that be a matter between he and his own country. As long as he behaves himself within his own borders, we should not be addressing any attack or resources against him."

A few weeks later, Mr. Arme felt he had to switch his position and support the war. In a recent conversation, however, he told me one of the main reasons

he left the House was that, because of his leadership position, he was being asked by the administration to support many things in which he did not believe.

Now, of course, the worst thing about the war is the death and serious injury to so many of our young soldiers. But high on my list of concerns is the damage this war has done and is doing to the future of the conservative movement.

This magazine and certain conservative columnists have been against the war from the start. But because several of the most famous conservatives—such as Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Bill O'Reilly—and the bully pulpit of the White House, have pushed the war, it is seen by most Americans as conservative. But the traditional conservative position was stated many years ago by Sen. Robert Taft: "No foreign policy can be justified except as a policy devoted ... to the protection of the liberty of the

American people, with war only as the last resort and only to preserve that liberty." This is consistent with the policy candidate George W. Bush advocated in 2000 when he criticized the Clinton administration for nation-building and said that we needed a more "humble" foreign policy.

It is the neoconservatives, not the war's conservative opponents, who are being untrue to the principles of the Old Right. William Kristol told the *New York Times*, "If we have to make common cause with the more hawkish liberals and fight the conservatives, that is fine with me, too." He said that neocons may end up as neo-liberals, whom he defined

as "neoconservatives who had been mugged by reality in Iraq."

In a column in mid-May, Robert Novak wrote that Republicans all over the country are "distracted about the U.S. adventure in Iraq." He quoted from a speech by Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), "we need to restrain what are growing U.S. messianic instincts—a sort of global social engineering where the United States feels it is both entitled and obligated to promote democracy—by force if necessary."

Since support for this war has sunk so low, and enthusiasm for it almost nonexistent, I hope that we will soon return to a truly conservative, non-interventionist foreign policy. But columnists like Charles Krauthammer, who urge an invasion of Iran, and recent events on the Hill make me wonder.

Republicans in Congress are being told that because of 9/11 and the war, we must support things we have always opposed: huge increases in our national debt, whopping deficits, and massive foreign aid. On July 30, the administration announced our deficit for this fiscal year would be a record \$445 billion. Along with our foreign-policy legitimacy, Republicans are in danger of losing one of our most respected positions—fiscal conservatism. As Gov. Phil Bredesen of Tennessee said at the Democratic Convention: "If you told me when I was in college that the Democrats would be the party of fiscal responsibility, I would have thought it crazy."

Americans do not want the war in Iraq to go on forever. Most do not even want us to be there for the ten years Paul Wolfowitz told the House Armed Services Committee we would have to remain. Likewise Iraqis. A poll taken by the Coalition Provisional Authority itself shows that 92 percent of Iraqis regard us as occupiers rather than liberators.

The conventional wisdom holds that the first President Bush, also a good man,

lost in 1992 because he cared more about foreign policy than problems here at home. This President Bush must show the American people that he is concerned at least as much, if not more, about their problems as rebuilding Iraq.

The president is going to be attacked by Kerry-Edwards no matter what he does. But I believe it would be very popular and would sew up his re-election if he would announce a phased, orderly withdrawal from Iraq. He could do this in a very positive way, saying we liberated Iraq from a horrible dictator and pointing out that he said at the start that we were not going to occupy Iraq. He could say that we have done far more for Iraq than any other nation has done for another in the history of the world. He could point to thousands of projects, big and small, and the almost \$200 billion we have spent there. But he also could refer to the polls showing that almost all Iraqis view us as occupiers and do not really appreciate what we have done. We cannot do more until Iraqis stop blowing each other up.

Some may say this is isolationist, but the truth is that the war in Iraq has isolated us from almost everyone other than a few foreign-policy elitists around the world. When they use thoughtless clichés like “we can’t cut and run” or “we must stay the course,” we should ask why. Is what we are accomplishing (or not accomplishing) in Iraq worth one more young American being killed? Would it be worth the life of your son or daughter?

We changed the name of the War Department many years ago to the Department of Defense. We should make it truly a Defense Department once again and bring our troops home. ■

Congressman John Duncan represents Tennessee's Second Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

[everyone's invited]

Terrorists as Tourists

No passports required.

By Paul Sperry

HOMELAND SECURITY SECRETARY Tom Ridge insists that America has grown “far safer” since 9/11. “Without going into the operational changes we’ve made at airports and borders, and the security enhancements, we are far, far better prepared to prevent an attack,” Ridge said in late March.

Yet according to his employees, who are actually out in the field trying to protect the borders, terrorists can still easily get into America—thanks to Washington’s continued efforts to protect loose immigration policies sacred to the U.S. travel industry.

Immigration officers revealed in recent interviews that Middle Eastern-born Canadian terrorists could still, as before 9/11, enter the U.S. at an airport with no visa, no background check, no I-94 entry-exit form—no passport even—and stay here as long as they want. Foreign terrorists could still enter the U.S. from the Caribbean or Mexico with nothing but a phony birth certificate or so-called “affidavit of citizenship,” available for as little as \$20 from a U.S. airline. And terrorists from Europe could still use forged passports to enter the U.S. under the federal Visa Waiver Program, a lucrative vehicle for the travel industry. These are loopholes big enough to drive a bomb-laden truck through. If you don’t feel “far safer,” you’re not alone. Neither do top officials in Ridge’s office, according to internal memos.

Months before a Spanish al-Qaeda cell blew up rush-hour trains in Madrid, killing nearly 200 commuters, U.S. intelligence was worried that al-Qaeda terrorists would use Spain as a transit point to enter America and carry out attacks. The Department of Homeland Security, in fact, warned customs agents across the country that al-Qaeda was trying to lower its Arab profile by recruiting operatives—including females—from Spain and other European countries to sneak into America and execute terrorist attacks. William Roy Surret, director of intelligence at U.S. Customs and Border Protection, a DHS bureau, spelled it out in a closely held internal memo. “One recurring concern are female operatives using Europe, especially Spain and France, as transit points en route to the United States,” he said in his Dec. 24 intelligence update. “This may include the use of false or altered documentation from Spain.”

Al-Qaeda has a strong presence there, as the Madrid bombings showed, and it was a key meeting ground for the 9/11 attacks. In the summer before, hijacking ringleader Mohamed Atta met in Spain with Ramzi bin al-Shibh, one of the 9/11 planners, to plot last-minute details. And passport fraud is on the rise there. The Spanish al-Qaeda cell’s alleged financier reportedly met with an operative in Denmark to produce 30 false passports for al-Qaeda associates. The passports were completed in late 2002.

Spain is one of 27 “low-risk” countries, mostly from Europe, that participate in the Visa Waiver Program. Travelers from those countries can enter the U.S. for business or pleasure for up to 90 days without obtaining the documentation that law enforcement needs to help screen out foreign threats—such as

placed tourist dollars ahead of U.S. national security by shelving the deadline for machine-readable passports for U.S. entry,” said an immigration officer at Los Angeles International Airport.

They have also shelved a post-9/11 regulation to guard against foreign terrorists posing as U.S. citizens, leaving another

according to a U.S. immigration officer at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, where many flights to Mexico and the Caribbean originate. “The affidavits presented to us are worthless. We end up having to take verbal declarations” of citizenship.

American Airlines, Sun Air, and Champion Air still sell the prohibited papers at Dallas-Fort Worth. Passengers also still present hospital birth certificates to prove their citizenship, forcing inspectors to make a judgment call based on their oral declaration. “If they make an oral declaration that they are American, we have to accept it,” the LAX inspector said. “This happens every single day.” At LAX, Alaska Airlines and Mexicana Airlines still issue affidavits to passengers who don’t have U.S. passports. Immigration inspectors in the field argue that behind the scenes Washington is undermining the critical first line of defense against an encore attack by al-Qaeda that may be staged south of the border. “After 9/11, who would run a border that way?” asked the DFW inspector. “We are.”

Security is no better north of the border. Nearly three years after 15 Saudis attacked America, a Saudi-born Canadian who maintains Saudi citizenship can hop on a plane to visit America and be admitted, few questions asked. He is not pre-screened by State, he is not fingerprinted or photographed upon arrival, he is not held to any departure date, and he doesn’t even need to present a Canadian passport.

“Canadians are still exempt from everything,” the LAX inspector said. “They are interviewed on entry, but otherwise they are pretty much treated much like an American. And they can even make an oral declaration [of Canadian citizenship] in lieu of a passport.

“And they will continue to be exempted from US-VISIT regardless of where they were born or how many

A SAUDI-BORN CANADIAN WHO MAINTAINS SAUDI CITIZENSHIP CAN HOP ON A PLANE TO VISIT AMERICA AND BE ADMITTED.

alleged twentieth hijacker Zacarias Moussaoui and shoe-bomber Richard Reid, who entered the U.S. by way of visa-waiver countries.

Because such foreigners don’t have to apply for visas, they don’t have to submit to State Department background checks. Starting Sept. 30, DHS plans to start fingerprinting and photographing them along with visa-holders under the new US-VISIT screening program, but in the three years since 9/11 they have not been subjected to increased scrutiny.

And Washington still hasn’t forced Spain to upgrade the security of its passports. After 9/11, Congress mandated that the State Department require visa-waiver countries to make their passports harder to forge by encoding them with barcodes or microchips. The deadline was originally set for October 2003 but was extended through October of this year after Europe complained.

Now State and DHS—despite internal warnings about the al-Qaeda threat from Spain and other European countries—have asked for an additional two-year extension. They say it’s necessary to avoid disrupting international travel, which of course would hurt industry profits and the economy. “Once again, Washington and the travel industry have

hole in border security. Before the attacks, U.S. citizens returning from Mexico and the Caribbean could get through customs with a hospital birth certificate or an affidavit of citizenship. But now they must show a passport or official government-issued birth certificate to get back into the country. Except DHS isn’t enforcing its own rule. Airlines are still selling affidavits of citizenship to passengers and allowing them to board with hospital certificates in lieu of passports.

The problem arises on the return leg of flights. A U.S. immigration inspector has no way of verifying from the affidavit if the passenger presenting it is indeed a U.S. citizen, who would not face the same anti-terror measures as a foreigner. For all the inspector knows, a departing passenger could have handed an affidavit off to a Middle Eastern terrorist in Mexico or at some Caribbean destination.

The FBI has already enlisted Central American authorities to help hunt down a dangerous al-Qaeda suspect, one they believe to be “the next Mohamed Atta.” Adnan G. El Shukrijumah of Saudi Arabia has been spotted in Panama and more recently in Honduras. He’s also visited Trinidad and Tobago. Yet, “DHS seems to have no interest in enforcing what papers for identity the airlines issue,”

other citizenships they may hold, even if they're from terrorist states," he added. "Amazing, huh?"

Asked about the special exemption for Canadians, DHS spokesman Bill Strassberger explained that America receives a large volume of traffic from its northern neighbor, whose citizens visit here on business or for pleasure, and putting them all through US-VISIT would cause travel "gridlock." Besides, he said, "We haven't had too many problems with Canadian terrorists."

But the FBI seems to have a lot of problems with them. It's currently investigating Abderraouf Jdey, a pilot who has been trained for al-Qaeda sui-

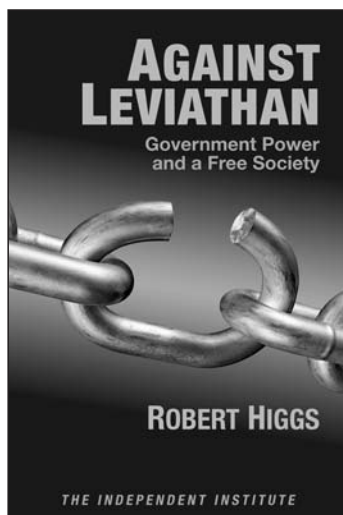
cide missions. Jdey is a Tunisian who obtained Canadian citizenship in 1995. El Shukrijumah, the Saudi, also is said to hold a Canadian passport. Both are on the terrorist watchlist, but what of their Canadian confederates who don't show up on the list? The FBI is looking for "other individuals" from Canada, according to John Pistole, FBI executive assistant director for counterterrorism. There are "Canadian connections that we're concerned about," he recently testified before the 9/11 Commission.

Canadian intelligence has said al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups are using the country—which is home to more than 210,000 immigrants from the

Middle East—as a base for waging *jihad*. Strassberger says he's confident that U.S. and Canadian intelligence will be able to identify al-Qaeda suspects and warn U.S. immigration officers about them before they try to enter the country—something U.S. intelligence wasn't able to do in advance of the arrival of the 9/11 hijackers, who went through a visa application process Canadians don't even have to go through. "Intelligence has improved dramatically since 9/11," he asserted.

Let's hope so. ■

Paul Sperry, formerly of Investor's Business Daily, is a Hoover Institution media fellow and author of Crude Politics.



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Democracy in Vermont

Small is beautiful in the Green Mountain state.

By Bill Kauffman

"While many seek the truth by scanning galaxies through powerful telescopes, my eyes have been glued to a microscope—looking down, not up, inward, not outward. America has often seemed transfixed by big. I am captivated by small."

—Frank Bryan

FRANK BRYAN IS THAT RARE political scientist who can begin one statistics-dappled tome by describing his wife as "the sexiest wench in the galaxy" and enliven another with footnotes recounting his first gun, cows he has milked, getting beat up in a dance hall over a girl, and the abandoned farms of his Vermont boyhood: "the only trace of the old McEachern place is in a faraway corner of my heart."

He once ran afoul of the town ordinances of Starksboro, where he lives in a converted deer camp on Big Hollow Road, by having 20 junker Chevettes in his yard. (As a communitarian, not a libertarian, he disposed of these parts-cars with only moderate grumbling.) Bryan is a legendary character at the University of Vermont, where he teaches political science: he is the horny-handed son of toil who does regression analysis, the regular-guy intellectual who prefers the company of "working-class people ... the old Vermonters." And now the irrepressible Bryan has made a major contribution to his field (and his country, which is Vermont) with *Real Democracy* (University of Chicago Press), his magnum opus, the most searching and sympa-

thetic book ever written about the town-meeting democracy of New England. The book is a veritable four-leaf clover of academia: a witty work of political science written from a defiantly rural populist point of view.

I met Frank Bryan for breakfast at the Oasis Diner on Bank Street, the working-class Democratic eatery in downtown Burlington that for 50 years has been owned and operated by the Lines family, making it an oasis of family ownership in the desert of Applebees and Olive Gardens.

Howard Dean may be the best-known living Vermonter, but Dean, Bryan notes, is a cosmopolitan flatlander who was "raised in an environment as completely estranged from town meetings as one can imagine." Though Dean displayed spasmodic heterodoxy in his presidential campaign, he embodies little of the "curious mixture of radicalism, populism, and conservatism" that Bryan says has defined Vermont politics since the days when Anti-Masonry and abolition were in vogue.

If the Green Mountains had a face, it would be Frank Bryan. He is the real Vermont, the enduring Vermont, not the picture postcard, not the *New York Times* reader in her air-conditioned summer home, but the Vermont of Robert Frost (a Grover Cleveland Democrat who placed his faith in "insubordinate Americans") and craggily iconic Sen. George Aiken, who once explained that "some folks just naturally love the mountains, and like to live up

among them where freedom of thought and action is logical and inherent."

"My mother raised me a Democrat. Vermont raised me a democrat. This book springs from a life of fighting the dissonance between the two," writes Bryan in *Real Democracy*. Son of a single mom, who worked in the mills, Bryan has that "redneck's chip on my shoulder" essential to a healthy, authentic populism. His Class of '59 at Newbury High totaled seven, which led to his politics: "Keep it small. The basketball isn't good, but everybody gets to play," as he told the *Vermont Quarterly*.

After graduation, "I went off to school and heard about how poor and destitute and dumb people like me were because of the size of my community." One summer he hiked Mount Moosilauke with his brother, who was studying for the priesthood. "I went up that mountain a Kennedy Democrat and came down a Goldwater conservative because my brother convinced me that the Democrats were going to destroy the small towns; they didn't care about small farms or town meeting."

Bryan has since shed his illusions about the commitment of Republicans to any small-town value not reducible to the bottom line on an annual corporate report. The modern GOP is the party of war and Wal-Mart (four of which deface Vermont, the last state to have been infected by the Arkansas Plague). Bryan now calls himself a "decentralist communitarian" whose heart "is with the small is beautiful crowd."

Yet he is no dewy-eyed idealizer of The People: “Jefferson said rural people are the chosen people of God—that’s a bunch of crap. But forced intimacy is good for society; it makes us tolerant. The reason I’ll stop and help you out of a snow bank on Big Hollow Road isn’t because I particularly like you. But I might see you tomorrow at the store and have to explain why I didn’t. And I expect reciprocity.”

Washington-New York conservatives despise Vermont for its “liberalism,” though I cannot see how Bernie Sanders is any more destructive of American liberties than, say, Dick Cheney. Or perhaps they hate Frank Bryan’s state because, lacking any sense of place or local loyalties themselves, they fear communities organized on a human scale. Burlington, Vermont’s largest city, has fewer than 40,000 residents, and the state leads the nation in the percentage of its population living in towns of under 2,500.

Frank Bryan calls himself a “Vermont patriot,” and one is reminded of Chester-ton’s dictum that a patriot never boasts of the largeness of his country but rather of its littleness. As he and John McClaughry wrote in *The Vermont Papers* (1989), their refreshingly radical proposal for devolution of state government: “Vermont matters most because it is small, not in spite of it.”

“The proposals that Vermont secede from the United States and Kingdom County secede from Vermont were moved and passed, as they had been annually since 1791, when the Green Mountain State first joined the Union. These were the only two measures the people of Lost Nation ever agreed upon unanimously.”

—Howard Frank Mosher
Northern Borders

Mosher, Bryan’s favorite Vermont novelist, depicts town meeting as a blend of cussedness and community, radicalism and renewal. Elsewhere Mosher has written of Northern Vermont as being “full of fiercely antiauthoritarian, independent-minded individualists” for whom “independence, rooted in local land ownership and local government, seems to have remained the chief objective.” Ecce Frank Bryan.

Bryan views town meeting as the palladium of this independence. His research into its workings and meaning has been his “life’s work,” as Harvard’s Jane Mansbridge has said. *Real Democracy* is the result.

Every March since 1969, Professor Bryan has sent his students at St. Michael’s College and later the University of Vermont to the school gyms, auditoriums, church cellars, and fire stations of the 236 Vermont towns holding annual meetings at which the citizens present—about 20 percent of a town’s population, on average—vote on budgets, elect officials, levy taxes, and otherwise decide whatever governmental business has not been usurped by the central authorities in Montpelier and Washington, D.C.

Bryan’s sample is enormous: almost 1,500 town meetings “encompassing 238,603 acts of participation by 63,140 citizens in 210 towns.” This mountain of data is vast and unique, for as Bryan notes incredulously, “No article on town meeting has ever been published in a major political science journal. Never. ... [W]e know much more about the Greek democracy of 2500 years ago than we do about real democracy in America today.”

Why the neglect and nescience among political scientists? “They don’t trust common people,” he says of his confreres. “They were trained by professors who were trained by people who were terrified by fascism and the ‘tyranny of the majority.’”

Transient suburbanites and hypermobile city dwellers, they fear nothing so much as the unlettered rural man with a voice and a meaningful vote. They cannot see that the diffusion of power inherent in town meeting is the best defense against tyranny. Bryan quotes Goldwater speechwriter turned Wobbly Karl Hess, who “once said that Adolf Hitler as chancellor of Germany is a horror; Adolf Hitler at a town meeting would be an a -- hole.”

Yes, localized direct democracy is majoritarian, but the citizen unhappy with a law may appeal to her neighbors, who are often kin or lifelong friends. At the national level, however, she is just a single vote in a mass of anonymous millions—not even a brick in the wall. A Vermonter who dislikes his town’s junk-

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car ordinance can remonstrate with his landmen; a Vermonter who dislikes “No Child Left Behind” or the Iraq War can shut up or get drunk, but he can’t get within a Free Speech Zone of George W. Bush.

Bryan’s central finding is that “Real democracy works better in small places—dramatically better.” The smaller the town, the higher the percentage of citizens who participate in town meeting. The only other variable with any potency is the presence of controversial items on the agenda. If town meeting is waning, as pulseless technocrats often charge, it is because “Vermont towns have steadily been losing the authority to deal with controversial issues.” Voting up or down on the purchase of a snowplow is fine, but for grassroots democracy to thrive, we must restore to small places control over education, welfare, and economic regulation.

“Issues are absolutely essential,” Bryan stresses. “Liberals think you go to town meeting because you have a civic duty. There’s some of that, but no one is damn fool enough to give up a spring day [for that]. But if their kids’ education is up for grabs, they’ll damn well be there.”

Bryan sums up the key to successful direct democracy: “Keep jurisdictions small and give them real things to do.”

“And where do I live by preference, when I am not teaching? Vermont. Why? Because it is, in most of the ways of freedom and space, more like the West I grew up in than most of the Contemporary West is.”

—Wallace Stegner, 1971

Since the 1930s, Vermont has attracted rustivating intellectuals who “bought abandoned farms and stayed from last frost to first,” as Bryan jokes.

Vermont doughtily gave Alf Landon three of his eight electoral votes in the presidential campaign of 1936, and on Town Meeting Day of that same year her gallant citizens rejected by a vote of 42,318 to 30,987 the Green Mountain Parkway, a federal proposal to build a freeway through the Green Mountains, despoiling them in the service of faster travel and car-window tourism.

Frank Bryan calls the defeat of the Green Mountain Parkway “the most democratic expression of environmental consciousness in American history.” I suppose that today’s Beltway conservatives would revile Vermont for spurning national greatness, progress, and the

pany has planned. The result would be the Vermont desired by many of the newest immigrants: no old Vermonters, but plenty of nature parks.

Frank Bryan describes the two waves of post-World War II immigration to his state: the first salutary, the second malignant. “The first were hippies who came for ideological reasons: they wanted to live small, get a horse or cow. They bought chainsaws and wounded themselves. But they’ve done a lot to preserve town meeting and local government because they were real lefties.”

The “post-1980s influx,” by contrast, “is much more upscale: let’s go to the cleanest, safest state in America and get

BRYAN SUMS UP THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL DIRECT DEMOCRACY:

“KEEP JURISDICTIONS SMALL AND GIVE THEM REAL THINGS TO DO.”

gracious gift of asphalt proffered by that modern conservative hero, FDR. (Bryan later opposed, unsuccessfully, the infliction of the Interstate Highway System upon northern Vermont.)

The rejection of the Green Mountain Parkway, which Bryan sees as mythic in its defiance and radical in its implications, reveals an old Vermont that is green and truculent, little and rebellious. I am reminded of “Where the Rivers Flow North” (1993), Vermont filmmaker Jay Craven’s fine adaptation of Howard Frank Mosher’s story of a hook-handed Northern Vermont logger and his Indian common-law wife, played *con brio* by Rip Torn and Tantoo Cardinal. The leased land on which the logger’s family has lived and died for generations is bought by the Northern Power Co., which intends to flood it for a dam. The logger, declaring that he will not be “bribed off my land,” tries instead to cut down the trees and, not incidentally, ruin the “nature park” the power com-

a trophy house with a nice view. They want to preserve the ambience of small—no old Chevettes in the yard; cows are okay as long as they don’t s---t too much—but they want to use the politics of centralized authority. They don’t care who’s living here or how we make decisions as long as Vermont looks like a theme park. They want to be in Vermont but they don’t want to live in Vermont. We spend tons of money to preserve old farm buildings, but there’s nothing like that to preserve town meeting or the citizen legislature or the two-year term for governor [which is under bipartisan assault] or the democratic values that created [Vermont] in the first place.”

Bryan notes the social gulf between the old Vermont and the new. “The people that had the [anti-civil unions] ‘Take Back Vermont’ signs were the people that created the image that these new guys want: they extol them. When a farmer stands up at a town meeting, the flatlanders all go, ‘It’s a farmer!’—like

God is here. But do they invite them over for tea? No. They don't socialize with them."

(Civil unions between same-sex couples, Vermont's latest claim to political particularity, "didn't have much impact," says Bryan. "The Right thought everything's going to hell, we'll be the haven, but nothing like that happened." The way the unions were achieved, however—by a "court-directed legislative cave-in"—affronted Bryan's democratic sensibilities. "We overturned 2500 years of Judeo-Christian tradition in three months without an election. The people who backed civil unions were so intolerant of those who didn't; the professional people couldn't understand why the red-necks were all bent out of shape.")

The Take Back Vermonters were acting in a long Vermont tradition of resistance to centralized tyranny. The state's political genius was a kind of stony Jeffersonianism—without the stain of slavery. Vermont learned early the virtues of states rights when it defied the Fugitive Slave Act. Vermont would not return a slave without a "Bill of Sale from the Almighty," declared state Supreme Court Justice Theophilus Harrington.

Vermont remained an independent republic, outside the nascent union, from 1777 to 1791, and imaginative Vermonters are asking, why not again? In 1990, Bryan traveled Vermont with State Chief Justice John Dooley debating the state's secession from the union. (Bryan argued the affirmative.) He is "very sympathetic" to the green economist Thomas Naylor's campaign for a "Second Vermont Republic"—that is, an independent Vermont, detached from the United States, as Naylor proposes in *The Vermont Manifesto* (2003).

"When I put the secession argument to the test intellectually, I can't think of a reason not to, even economically," says Bryan, who nevertheless opposes secession for perhaps the only legitimate

reason: sentiment. "I couldn't sit around and let a bunch of crazy Vermonters like me tear down the American flag. My heart would break."

The regionalist who actually lives in the place he loves is often given to alternating fits of lachrymose romanticism and utter despair. Bryan sounds the occasional plangent note, but in the main he radiates optimism: a quondam technophobe, he credits computer technology with making possible "a dramatic decentralization of lifestyle and culture."

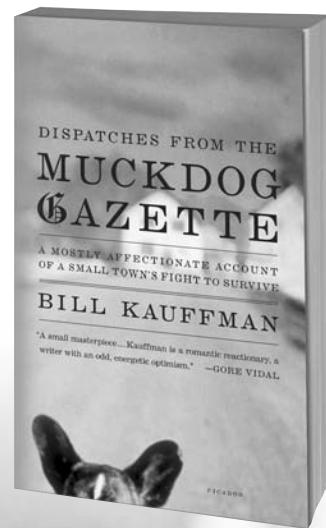
"People are living and working in the same place," he says. "They don't have to drive to a centralized workplace, which was the great dislocation of the 20th century." The divorce of work and home visited upon us horrors ranging from daycare to the Interstate Highway System; its reunion may bear fruit delicious, including the revitalization of local democracy.

In any event, Frank Bryan is in Vermont, for better or worse. As a patriot, he stands on what he stands for. With *Real Democracy*, he has given his state, and us outlanders as well, the most detailed and affectionate portrait ever painted of town meeting, which is, as Bryan says, "where you learn to be a good citizen." His book is also an act of love. It shows Vermont how to stay Vermont. For as Bryan avers, "The only way to save Vermont is to preserve our democratic institutions."

Bryan likes to quote Jack London: "I would rather my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled in dry rot." Those fires you see lighting the Green Mountain sky are Frank Bryan's bonfire, which burns so brilliantly because its kindling is so dear to him, so dear and so wonderfully, life-givingly small. ■

Bill Kauffman's most recent book, Dispatches from the Muckdog Gazette, is now out in paperback from Picador.

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The Way the West Won

Without its animating Christian force, our civilization is withering.

By James Kurth

FIFTY YEARS AGO, Western civilization was a central idea, and ideal, in American political and intellectual discourse. American political leaders frequently said that the United States was the heir to Western civilization and that it had a duty to defend the West against its enemies, most obviously the Communist bloc led by the Soviet Union. American academic leaders regarded the Western tradition with respect, and courses on Western civilization were often required in American universities. The 1950s were an era when the leading institutions of America (and with their support and guidance, the leading institutions of Europe) were confident and articulate in identifying with and promoting the Western tradition.

Today, Western civilization is almost never mentioned, much less promoted, in political and intellectual discourse. When it is mentioned amongst Western elites, its traditions are almost always an object of criticism and contempt. Real discussion of Western civilization is usually by the political, intellectual, and religious leaders of non-Western societies, most obviously Muslim societies. Indeed, the idea of the West seems to be most charged with vital energy in the excited mind of its principle contemporary enemy, radical Islam. The most lively consciousness about the West actually seems to be found within the East. Within the West itself, the Western civilization of 50 years ago has become the lost civilization of today.

What explains this great transforma-

tion? Which of the traditions remain a living reality today? And what might be the fate of these traditions in the future?

Among scholarly interpreters of the West, it has been widely understood that Western civilization was formed from three distinct traditions: (1) the classical culture of Greece and Rome; (2) the Christian religion; and (3) the Enlightenment of the modern era. Many have seen Western civilization as a synthesis of all three traditions; others have emphasized the conflicts among them, the struggle between the Christian religion and the Enlightenment being especially consequential.

The first of the Western traditions was classical culture. In the realm of politics, for example, Greece contributed the idea of a republic, while Rome contributed that of an empire. Greece contributed the idea of liberty and Rome that of law. Combined, these gave rise to the important concept of liberty under law.

Christian theology established the sanctity of the individual believer and called for obedience to an authority (Christ) higher than any secular ruler (Caesar), ideas that further refined and supported the concept of liberty under law. Christian institutions, particularly the papacy of the Roman Catholic Church and its ongoing struggle with the Holy Roman Emperor and local monarchs, bequeathed to the West the idea of a separation of powers.

The modern Enlightenment provided the ideas of liberal democracy, the free market, and the belief in reason and sci-

ence as the means for making sense of the world. More particularly, the British Revolution of 1688 emphasized liberty and constitutionalism, while the French Revolution of 1789 emphasized democracy and rationalism. The differences between the Enlightenment in Britain and on the Continent would give rise to important divisions within the West during much of the 19th and 20th centuries. This was the case with the Industrial Revolution and the different responses to it; both state guidance of the economy and Marxist ideology played a much greater role on the Continent than in Britain or the United States.

From Christendom to Western Civilization

The very term "Western civilization" is something of an anomaly. It was invented only a century ago, and it is not really comparable to the terms commonly used for other civilizations. Most other civilizations (e.g., Islamic, Hindu, Orthodox) have retained a religious identification, and, indeed, before the Enlightenment the term that people in the West commonly used for their civilization was "Christendom." The story of how "Christendom" became "Western civilization" is significant for understanding the changing nature of our civilization and perhaps its fate.

The Enlightenment brought about the secularization of most of the intellectual elite of Christendom. This elite ensured that the civilization was no longer called

that, even though much of its ordinary population remained Christian. The French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution spread Enlightenment ideas to important parts of that population, but the Christian churches continued to be a vital force. Since the Enlightenment, however, it has not been possible to refer to the civilization as Christendom.

For about a century, the preferred term for the civilization was “Europe.” But this was also the time that saw the rise of European settlements in the New World to the status of independent nations. This made the term “European civilization” unsuitable, and in the early 20th century, a few Europeans conceived of a new and more appropriate term, “Western civilization.” Almost as soon as it was invented, the term began to be used in the pessimistic context of civilizational decline, as in Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West* (1918). Had the term been left to Europeans alone it would probably have had a short and unhappy life, particularly given the devastating moral, as well as material, consequences of the First World War.

The American Redefinition of Western Civilization

It was the New World that was called in to redress the pessimism of the Old. Americans breathed a new meaning into the concept of Western civilization, first as they dealt with the great surge of European immigrants and then as they dealt with the European nations in the course of the two World Wars. For Americans in the first decades of the 20th century, Western civilization was principally the ideas of liberty and individualism, institutionalized in liberal democracy, free markets, constitutionalism, and the rule of law. Americans referred to this ensemble of ideas as “the American creed,” which they promoted as a principal means to Americanize new immigrants. These

ideas were, of course, direct descendents of the British Enlightenment, but they were also indirect descendents of some of the elements in the classical and the Christian traditions.

American intervention in the First World War and again in the Second World War brought about a redefinition of Western civilization. The new conception has been described as “the Allied scheme of history,” but its central pillar was the American sense of historical mission. The new content of Western civilization became the American creed. Conversely, the new context for the American creed became Western civilization. The combination of American energy and European legacy gave the idea of Western civilization both power and legitimacy in both America and Europe. The power helped the United States win the First World War against the German Empire, the Second World War against Nazi Germany, and the Cold War against the Soviet Union. The legitimacy helped to order the long peace within Western Europe that was very much intertwined with the Cold War. With its appropriation by America, therefore, the idea of Western civilization experienced its heroic age.

The Cold War Concept of Western Civilization

The Cold War crystallized the political and intellectual division between the West and the East. The “Allied scheme of history,” the product of the two World Wars, was institutionalized into NATO. Almost all of the members of the North Atlantic alliance appeared to be heirs of each of the three great Western traditions, and they seemed to be comfortable and confident in this identity. (NATO did include a couple of cultural anomalies—Greece and Turkey—which were obviously outside elements of the three traditions, and the U.S. did have

another, immensely important, ally—Japan—which was obviously outside all three traditions, as well as outside any plausible geographical definition of the West. But these anomalies became acceptable with the argument that each of these countries was now engaged in the grand project of “Westernization.”)

During the first decade of the Cold War, the struggle between the West and the East took the form of a struggle between “the Free World” and “the Socialist World,” as the two antagonists referred to themselves. With the decolonization of the European empires, a new region, the South, emerged and the struggle was said to be between the First and Second Worlds over the future of the Third. Both the West and the East offered the South a particular version of the Enlightenment project, a secular doctrine of progress. The West promoted liberalism, which was largely a product of the British Enlightenment, while the East promoted Marxism, which was largely a product of the French Enlightenment. It is significant, however, that the West decided that it could not promote the other Western traditions, the classical culture and the Christian religion.

The 1950s, the high Cold War, were the golden age of the conception of Western civilization. With the 1960s, it came under sustained assault, and the Western traditions have been on the defensive ever since, though defensive may be too strong a term, since today very few defenders of Western civilization can be found.

What were the causes of this great rejection of the great traditions? We will begin with the rejection of the classical one, which even in the seeming golden age was the most vulnerable.

The Death of the Classical Tradition

The classical tradition was still taught to some extent in American and European universities in the 1950s. But deep

within this classical education was a problematic assumption: that this tradition was relevant for a particular part of society. This was the elite who became the governors, administrators, and judges. The classical tradition valued aristocracy and hierarchy, honor and duty. (The ideal career for the student of the classical tradition during the modern age was to become a colonial administrator, such as the legendary young men who went out from Oxford and Cambridge to become district officers of the British Empire in India.)

Antithetical to the classical spirit are both the democratic spirit and the commercial spirit, which were greatly strengthened by the Enlightenment. They were, of course, especially prevalent in the United States. Whatever might be made of “classical republican” ideas at the time of the American founding, by the 1830s much of America was thoroughly democratic and commercial in its spirit, as Tocqueville famously demonstrated in his masterpiece *Democracy in America*. Although the America of the 1950s was the leader of the West during the golden age of self-consciousness about Western civilization, the classical tradition was by that time almost wholly invisible in American life. This meant that there would be no substantial interest in defending that tradition if it were ever assaulted by some substantial force.

The classical culture of Greece and Rome, so integral to both Western civilization and to the civilization shaped by Eastern Orthodoxy, formed no part of the history of most other cultures. It meant almost nothing to the peoples of Asia or Africa, or even to the Indian and Mestizo peoples of Latin America. But the United States had living within its borders many descendants of these non-Western peoples, and it would come to have vastly more as a result of the Immigration Act of 1965. Their political and

intellectual leaders saw classical culture as a device by which the traditional elite excluded them from equal participation and respect within what should be a democratic society. In regard to the classical culture, therefore, the civil-rights movement became an uncivil wrecking operation. At the same time, the anti-colonial movement performed a similar operation in regard to Europe.

The political and economic elites of America and also those of Europe (who were now following American leadership in many ways)—imbued as they were with the democratic and the commercial spirit—had already ceased to believe in the classical tradition, since it was so remote from the actuality of their lives. Now, in order to maintain their political and economic positions in the face of the civil-rights and anti-colonial movements, they were quick to appease these anti-Western forces by abandoning the last remnants of the classical tradition.

The Ordeal of the Christian Tradition

The Christian tradition also came under assault in the 1960s, and the Enlightenment was again at the intellectual and ideological center of the attack. The Enlightenment had always believed in reason and science as the means of making sense of the world. Many of its adherents were possessed by an animus (actually, the original sin of pride) to overthrow all traditional authority, both secular and religious, and to appropriate all authority for themselves. This drove them to use reason and science in a biased way to deny any Biblical and spiritual basis for truth and to therefore denigrate the Christian religion.

This animus had existed in the Enlightenment tradition since its origin. However, in the 1960s there was a massive expansion in the number of students in secular universities and also a massive expansion of popular (actually

pagan) culture promulgated by secular media. The Enlightenment mentality had penetrated much of the elite at the beginning of the industrial age. Now, at the beginning of the information age, it expanded its dominion over much of the young. These intellectual and cultural developments were reinforced by developments in technology (the sudden availability of new contraceptive methods) and in the economy (the sudden entry of large numbers of women into the new full-time jobs produced by the information economy). They in turn resulted in a momentous political development: the rise of a powerful feminist movement and, when contraceptive technologies proved insufficient, its promotion of abortion as its central project.

Each of these developments, which surged in the 1960s and which continue today, contradicted the practice of the Christian religion, though Western elites have justified them as the progressive fulfillment of Enlightenment ideas of liberty and equality. Seen from a Biblical perspective, however, they are really just new manifestations of the ancient forces of pride and rebellion.

The assault on the Christian religion has been institutionalized by changes in the ethnic structure of both America and Europe. In the United States, a series of Supreme Court decisions erected a massive (and radically new) wall between church and state, in effect driving Christianity from the public square. This development was related to the collapse of the Protestant (WASP) ascendancy in the American intellectual and legal elites and to the ascendancy of Jews into those elites. In Europe, large-scale immigration from Muslim countries began in the 1960s and Muslims now comprise 5-10 percent of the population of many European countries.

Although the forces assaulting the Christian tradition have operated throughout the West, the effects have

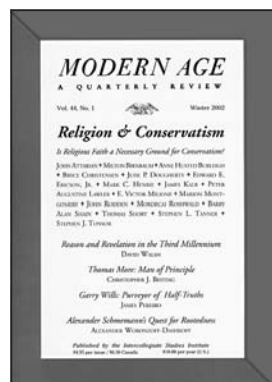
been different in Europe and America. In Europe, the Christian churches had been bound up with the traditional political and social authorities. As these authorities declined with the spread of liberal democracy and free markets—the working out of the democratic and the commercial spirits—the Christian churches declined along with them. By contrast, in America the large number of different denominations (a distinctively American term), which were independent of the state and each other, meant that almost from the origins of the U.S. there was a kind of religious democracy and market. If a particular church seemed to be bound up with a discredited and declining political or social

authority, Christians in America could easily move to a new church, while keeping the essentials of the Christian religion. This helps to explain why today Christianity is much more vital in America than it is in Europe. The American elites have rejected it, but the Christian religion is meaningful and central to large sections of the population.

The Dominance of the Enlightenment Tradition

The only Western tradition accepted by the political, intellectual, and economic elites of the West is the Enlightenment. For American political and economic elites, this largely means the British (or

Anglo-American) Enlightenment, with its emphasis on the liberty of individuals, institutionalized in liberal democracy and free markets. For European political, intellectual, and economic elites (and for the American intellectual elite located in academia and the media), this largely means the French (or Continental) Enlightenment, with its emphasis on the rationalism of elites, institutionalized in bureaucratic authority and the credentialed society. Together, these elites promote the contemporary version of the Enlightenment project. They are intent upon imposing it around the world—and upon eliminating any vestige of the other Western traditions—the classical and the Christian.



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The rejection of the Christian faith by Western elites does not mean that they have rejected all faiths. Despite the claims and conceits of rationalists and scientists, every human being believes in some things that cannot be proven (and therefore cannot be established by reason) or that cannot be seen (and therefore cannot be established by science) and that therefore have to be taken on faith. Ever since the coming of the Enlightenment, Western elites have adhered to a variety of secularist and universalist faiths, which in effect have been religions without God. Kenneth Minogue has identified these as (1) the idea of progress, (2) Marxism, and (3) "Olympianism," which is the contemporary belief that an enlightened intellectual elite can and should bring about "human betterment ... on a global scale by forcing the peoples of the world into a single community based on the universal enjoyment of appropriate human rights." As Minogue demonstrates, each of these secular religions has identified Christianity as its enemy. Indeed, the Olympianism that dominates in our time sees the very idea of Western civilization itself to be an obstacle to its grand global and universalist project.

The universalist ideology of Olympian elites is largely consistent with, and perhaps reflective of, the expanding interests of global corporations. During the first half of the Cold War, American corporations found their most attractive business opportunities to be in Europe or other Western countries. During the second half of the Cold War, however, American multinational corporations expanded into non-Western regions. Finally, with the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the preferred arena for American multinational corporations became the entire world. For multinational, now global, corporations, it became important to be identified with ideals that appeared to be progressive and global,

even inevitable and universal, and not to be identified with ideas and ideals that were Western and traditional.

The result of these developments has been the redefinition of the ideal economic arena from Western to global, of the ideal society from Western to multicultural, and the ideal political system from Western to transnational. There would be a universal empire—except that it will be called global governance, and a universal religion—except that it will be called human rights.

From the Enlightenment Tradition to Post-Western Civilization

Historians usually date the beginning of the modern era at the end of the 15th century; the Italian Renaissance and the European explorations of the non-European world were major movements that inaugurated and shaped the new era. They were soon followed by others, such as the Reformation and the scientific exploration of the natural world. The postmodern era seems to have begun at the end of the 20th century, making the modern era just about half a millennium in length.

The modern era can be seen as the Western era: the defining movements originated in Europe, and Europeans spread, even imposed, them over the rest of the world. Similarly, the postmodern era can also be seen as the post-Western era, with most of the Western traditions not only rejected by non-Western societies, but also abandoned by the elites of Western societies. All of the elements of the postmodern movement originated in Europe (particularly in France), where they could be seen as logical deductions from the French Enlightenment, and postmodern ideologues have engaged in a compulsive anti-Western project in both Europe and America. They have been joined by their post-colonial counterparts in the non-Western world.

Together, they form a grand alliance against Western civilization.

The principal enemy is the contemporary version of the Enlightenment, especially the French Enlightenment. Because of its universalist pretensions and illusions, its adherents have made the people of the West indiscriminating about other cultures and unconfident about their own. They have therefore made the West disoriented and vulnerable to assault from the East and especially from Islam. This assault may come from attacks by networks of Islamic terrorists or it may come from members of the large and alienated Muslim communities now in the West. But for Western civilization, Islam is merely a disease of the skin; the Enlightenment has mutated into a disease of the heart.

Defenders of the Faith: The Role of Liberals, Conservatives, and Neo-Conservatives

Who stands to defend Western civilization in its authenticity and fullness? Certainly not liberals. Those in the intellectual sector are largely multiculturalists; those in the business sector are largely globalists; and those in the political sector largely represent these business and intellectual views. All adhere to the universalist ideology, and liberals have never liked tradition anyway. They only accept their own tradition, that of the Enlightenment, if they re-conceive of it as being not "tradition" but "progress."

One would expect conservatives to like and support tradition. But among purported conservatives, it is important to make a distinction between traditional and neoconservatives. From their origins (be it as followers of Leon Trotsky or of Leo Strauss), neoconservatives have seen the Christian tradition as an alien, even a threatening, one. As for the classical tradition, their view of it has been formed by the decidedly

untraditional interpretation of classical philosophy given by Strauss. The only Western tradition that neoconservatives want to defend is the Enlightenment. In recent years, they have wanted to advance it in the rest of the world with the establishment of a kind of American empire. This is not a conservative project but a radical and revolutionary one.

The true defenders of the Western traditions will be the traditional conservatives. They are able to recognize that the central and crucial tradition of Western civilization is the Christian tradition, which has carried on the best elements of the classical tradition, while subordinating them to a higher Biblical truth. Christianity, in other words, kept the other Western traditions in balance. Perhaps in our time it is the calling of those few traditional conservatives found within the educated elite to reach out to the large numbers of Christians within the wider population, to help deepen their understanding of the major issues before us, and to give voice to their Christian—and Western—convictions.

The protagonists of the contemporary version of the Enlightenment may think that they will create a universal civilization, both abroad and at home, but the evidence is accumulating that they have instead opened the doors to the barbarians, both without (e.g., Islamic terrorists) and within (e.g., pagan disregard for human life).

The best defense against the new barbarians will be found in the Christian religion, for with it, Western civilization became the most creative, indeed the highest, civilization in human history. With a revival of the Christian tradition, Western civilization would not only prevail over the new barbarians, but it would become more truly civilized. ■

James Kurth is a professor at Swarthmore College. A version of this essay appeared in Intercollegiate Review.

The White House is facing criticism from Congress, Britain, and Pakistan for leaking the identity of al-Qaeda computer expert Mohammad Nur Khan.

Khan was co-operating with the Pakistanis and the CIA in secret sting operations against al-Qaeda until his name surfaced in the *New York Times*. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice's office is believed to be responsible for the leak, having inexplicably given Khan's name to a journalist as "background." Khan was immediately removed to a safe location to protect him from possible reprisals. Subsequent arrests in London appear to have been staged to protect the identity of a British-controlled al-Qaeda source in contact with Khan. The media exposure forced the British hand and disrupted a successful ongoing operation. New intelligence indicators suggest al-Qaeda has "gone to ground" as a result of the Pakistani arrests, the British roundups, and the widespread publicity surrounding potential targets in the United States.



The Bush administration is taking largely cosmetic steps to control the borders with Mexico and Canada.

Up until now, illegal immigrants have been able to appeal deportation to an immigration judge, a process that can take up to a year. The Department of Homeland Security has now given border patrol agents the power to deport the immigrants without any legal review. The new rules will apply to any illegal immigrants detected within 100 miles of the border and will permit deportation within a few days. Many critics in Congress have demanded that the borders be controlled and have wondered why little has been done so long after 9/11. But even the new rules have a huge loophole: Mexicans and Canadians will be exempt from the procedure and will still be able to use the immigration courts. As Mexicans constitute the majority of illegal immigrants, the new policy might be regarded as a carefully crafted attempt to lock the front door publicly while the back door stays wide open.



The appointment of Congressman Porter Goss as CIA Director is controversial because of his reputation as a partisan supporter of the president and his resistance to meaningful reform.

Goss served as a CIA Clandestine Services officer in Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic from 1962 until 1971. He was also involved in the Bay of Pigs Operation, working out of Miami with Cuban exiles. In 1970, he was posted to London where he became ill with a blood infection that he had acquired while in Haiti. He resigned from the agency in 1971 because of his health and began his political career in his adopted state, Florida. Goss's career in the agency and his service as chairman of the House Intelligence Committee for the past seven years give him a great body of experience to draw on but may also blind him to the cultural problems that have made the CIA ineffective. As he lacks any real political stature, it will be easy for the White House to manipulate him, which may be why he was selected. ■

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a partner in Cannistraro Associates, an international security consultancy.

Arts & Letters

FILM

[Bright Young Things]

A Tale of Waugh

By Steve Sailer

ON PAPER, the English wit Stephen Fry's directorial debut "Bright Young Things"—his adaptation of *Vile Bodies*, Evelyn Waugh's grating satire of café society—sounded like one of the least promising films of the year.

While authors repetitively deplore the movie industry's philistinism, the reality is that decision-makers in the film business are suckers for prestigious literature, even though the best source novels for movies are clearly page-turning best-sellers that are longer on plot and character than aesthetic ambition, such as *Gone With the Wind* and *The Godfather*. In contrast, books renowned for their superb sentences usually flounder on screen because nobody knows how to film a prose style. Director John Huston, for instance, made numerous literary monuments such as *Moby Dick* and *The Red Badge of Courage* into forgettable movies, but his most enduring classics are based on the genre novels *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*, and *The African Queen*.

During his own lifetime, Waugh's reputation hardly exceeded that of Jay McInerney's today, but eventually the zeal of conservatives such as William F. Buckley, Tom Wolfe, and Tom Stoppard succeeded in "expanding the canon" to include Waugh. Over the last two years,

for example, Waugh has been mentioned in the *Atlantic Monthly* as often as Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald combined. (And how many good movies have been based on their books?)

Even more ominous than Waugh's deservedly high artistic standing, *Vile Bodies* gives me a pain every time I reread it. It's the prototypical second novel. A young novelist mines his entire quarter century or so of life for his successful first book (in Waugh's case, the delightful *Decline and Fall*). Then, when it's time to write another, he finds he doesn't have any new experiences to draw upon other than all those snazzy but soul-sapping parties he's attended since he first surfaced in the media.

Waugh's version is particularly sick-making, as the daft debutante Agatha Runcible would say in the argot that became a fad when *Vile Bodies* hit the 1930 bestseller list. Waugh's bride, the "She-Evelyn," cuckolded him while he was off writing the first draft. Then an agnostic, without the consolations of the Catholicism to which he would convert the following year, Waugh's rage embittered his revisions.

Vile Bodies is also Waugh's most experimental novel, an attempt to further the modernist trend toward showing rather than telling that he detected in the otherwise incommensurable works of the two-fisted Hemingway and the fey Ronald Firbank. With long swaths of dialogue separated by brief, uninflected narration, *Vile Bodies* reads like a screenplay, and nobody reads screenplays if he doesn't have to.

Nonetheless, the brilliance of Waugh's ear for spoken idioms has made *Vile Bodies* a steady seller for three quarters of a century. Those conversations help make watching "Bright Young Things"

far more satisfying than reading *Vile Bodies*. Although Fry's ensemble comedy (which opens Aug. 20 in New York) is rather slight, no film rendition of a major novelist's work has been this much more fun than the original book since Bogie and Bacall steamed up Hemingway's embarrassing *To Have and Have Not*.

For example, Peter O'Toole delivers a howlingly funny cameo performance as a passive-aggressive eccentric, one as striking as John Gielgud's similar role as Jeremy Irons's slyly mad father in the famous miniseries of Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. I went home sure that Fry had penned some new jokes because the character is so much funnier than I recalled. Upon checking the novel, however, I found that Mr. O'Toole, being a much better reader of dialogue than I am, had only drawn out hilarity that I'd never noticed.

Fry, though, is wisely unafraid to make substantial changes, even replacing Waugh's bleak conclusion with a complicated happy ending reminiscent of the contrivance the older and less distraught Waugh used in his 1938 masterpiece *Scoop*.

Fry apprenticed for this job by starring as P.G. Wodehouse's peerless butler in the early 1990s British TV series "Jeeves and Wooster," which may be the most gratifying adaptation of great prose I've ever seen. Screenwriter Clive Exton fearlessly rewrote Wodehouse's plots and the directors used vibrant music and editing to stand in for Wodehouse's unparalleled narration.

Similarly, Fry's film looks and sounds superb for a first-time director. Moreover, in contrast to the 11-hour "Brideshead" miniseries, Fry zips through the 320 pages of *Vile Bodies* in 106 often-dazzling minutes. ■

BOOKS

[What's the Matter With Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America, Thomas Frank, Metropolitan Books, 307 pages]

Rx: Prarie Marxism

By Daniel McCarthy

UNLIKELY THOUGH IT MAY SOUND, Kansas is the vanguard of the nation. Far from being the idyllic heart of Middle America, this is a land swept from time to time by cultural upheavals every bit as turbulent as the twister that blew poor Dorothy off to Oz. And what's more, the movements that take the Sunflower State by storm have a way of engulfing the whole country. Everything from Pizza Hut to the Civil War started here, and today Kansas is on the bleeding edge of trends ranging from globalization (and immigration) to corporate scandals (think Sprint) to the phenomenon that Thomas Frank calls "the backlash."

What's the Matter With Kansas? is a dispatch from the front lines of the culture war, a book filled with anecdotes about the men and women, rich and poor, who dedicate much of their lives to fighting over abortion, evolution, and control of the state government. Frank, a native Kansan himself, doesn't agree with these people politically but, at least where the blue-collar activists are concerned, he often finds them likeable and always accords them a degree of respect. That goes not only for the pro-life leader who works on the line in a soda-pop bottling factory, but also for the sincere Catholic so traumatized by the Church's apparent liberalism that he decided to declare himself the true successor to the throne of St. Peter. Unlike Oz, Kansas has no omnipotent wizard—but it does have its very own pope.

Frank pleads with his reader not to dismiss this man as an outright loon; the self-styled Pope Michael I is only the most extreme example of a type that, according to the author, is common on these gusty plains. Such Kansans take religion very seriously: so many Kansans so seriously, in fact, that in 1999 the state school board expunged Darwinism from Kansas's testing standards. Voters and activists who supported that move are also the cadres that helped elect Sam Brownback, a man who has since made a name for himself as an outspoken pro-lifer and opponent of human cloning, to the U.S. Senate. There are a growing number of politicians like Brownback in Kansas, from U.S. Rep. Todd Tiahrt of Wichita to a legion of state legislators, actual and would-be. The Religious Right flexes electoral muscle here.

Not everyone in the state is happy about that. One Republican congressional candidate was sufficiently ashamed of the school board's action in 1999 that he put up a billboard near Kansas City that read simply "Embarrassed?" And in 2002, moderate Republicans, or "mods" as Frank calls them, voted against their own party's gubernatorial nominee to help elect Democrat Kathleen Sibelius. The outgoing Republican governor, Bill Graves, refused to endorse his party's candidate. The "cons," for their part, have just as little love of the "mods"—Frank relates that in 1996 the con-controlled state Republican Party refused to make Governor Graves a delegate to the Republican National

conservatives vote for an end to abortion, bringing faith back to the schools, and cleaning up the culture. But what they get from their elected officials are lowered taxes for the state's wealthiest few and big perks for big business. The abortion clinics never close, but factories do. Frank is not explicitly a Marxist but his bottom line is that the backlash, the movement of religious and social conservatives against the perceived power of liberal elites, is a form of false-consciousness, substituting for a real and ongoing class war a symbolic and ineffectual—and never-ending—culture war.

To make his case Frank examines some of the beneficiaries of the backlash, both those in elected office and those in the private sector. Pro-life champion Brownback, he notes, started his career as a pro-choice (and pro-business) state secretary of agriculture. The board of education that threw Darwin out of class Frank characterizes as opportunistic: they knew that the uproar they caused would get them duly denounced in editorial pages from New York to Los Angeles and by everyone from biology professors to stand-up comics. And to be damned by such liberal elites would only help at election time; as Frank summarizes, "it was an exercise in anti-intellectualism." Liberals with Ivy League degrees make useful pincushions for the barbs of backlash leaders, Frank argues, even when those very same leaders frequently have Ivy League educations themselves.

ABORTION CLINICS NEVER CLOSE, BUT FACTORIES DO.

Convention. Elsewhere the country may be divided between red and blue, but in Kansas, fratricidal factions of a single party duke it out.

Or do they? Frank is a man of old-time left-wing sensibilities; he isn't inclined to take social issues at face value. Instead he subjects Kansas politics to an analysis of class interests, the results of which present him with a paradox. Grassroots

The millionaires of Mission Hills, a suburb of Kansas City that is the wealthiest place in the state, may not like all this hubbub. But they can live with its consequences: the telecom execs and CEOs of this privileged enclave profit mightily from the tax cuts and deregulation that backlash politicians shower upon them. To guarantee that readers will see this as a bad thing—and to

amplify their sense of class consciousness, or indeed, resentment—Frank early on in his account details the kinds of corporate scandals that have shaken Kansas in recent years. There's the tale of the former public utility, Westar, whose flashy chief executive's compensation went up even as the company's share prices went down. His windfall only stopped when he left the company under the cloud of a money-laundering charge. And, of course, there's Sprint, the Kansas City area's largest employer, two of whose executives made over \$300 million on paper from the telecom's planned merger with WorldCom, even though federal regulators ultimately scuppered the deal. Had the corporate marriage taken place, the K.C. suburb of Overland Park, home to the company, would have been devastated,

farmers but now, since 1996, does so in such a way as to benefit the largest corporate farms the most.

But blue-collar Kansans are not up in arms over their economic plight. Instead, it's the culture, stupid. What worries the folks who work in bottling plants and Boeing factories is the moral decay of the nation and the sense that the country is being run by alien interests, by liberal elites. While never abandoning his economic emphasis, in rare moments Frank concedes some points here. He writes, for example, "whatever else the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision might have been, it was also a monument to the power of the professions"—medical, journalistic, and above all legal. "*Roe v. Wade* demonstrated in no uncertain manner the power of the legal profession to override everyone from the

as well. While he does criticize the Democratic Party for its Clintonesque "triangulation" and failure to address the economic interests of Kansans, he never asks why the Democrats have such an allergy to the moral values of those same voters. Based on the evidence Frank himself provides, one would think that a pro-life, culturally conservative, economically liberal candidate could do very well; why then don't the Democrats field such candidates? Frank doesn't ask because the answer might suggest that there's some substance to populist conservative complaints about elitist, godless liberalism after all.

The book suffers too from an almost kaleidoscopic approach to different angles of its subject, with chapters dedicated to disparate topics such as Frank's own class-conscious experiences in college, the history of Kansan populism, and profiles of leading figures of the backlash. All of it is interesting and relevant—indeed, almost every chapter contains an entire larder of food for thought—but the whole fails to be greater than the sum of its parts. The excerpts that ran in *Harper's* some months ago had more focus and rigor.

These failures of form and content do not seriously undermine the book's value, however. Conservatives will answer the questions Frank asks otherwise than he does; nonetheless they are questions that needed to be asked. The tension between cultural ends and political means, for one thing, is of mounting relevance to conservatives in this election season. And class analysis, which is simply a look at how economics and politics intertwine, is something more on the Right would do well to take seriously. This is not so foreign to the conservative tradition as one might think: not only have such men as James Burnham taken a keen interest in it, but even before Marx an American thinker, John C. Calhoun, had staked out a theory of class. Conservatives will not, of course, want to abandon the culture war, nor should they. But we stand to be reminded from Frank about urgency of issues beyond culture and morals. ■

CONSERVATIVES WILL ANSWER THE QUESTIONS FRANK ASKS OTHERWISE THAN HE DOES; NONETHELESS THEY ARE QUESTIONS THAT NEEDED TO BE ASKED.

and after it had just remodeled part of its south side to accommodate the company, to boot.

The picture Frank paints of Kansas beyond the Missouri border is even bleaker. Junk shops proliferate in small towns denuded of industry and commerce. Rumors have it that some places, their young having long since fled, survive solely on Social Security. One town that it doing well economically is Garden City, in the southwest—the meatpacking facilities that long ago left Kansas City came here. And with them came immigrants who would work for little and complain even less; now this small Midwestern town of 30,000 is 44 percent Hispanic. Frank's interest, as always, is in the economic rather than cultural changes that ensued, and he evokes "the trailer-park cities, dilapidated and unpaved and rubbish-strewn, that house a large part of Garden City's workforce." As for Kansas agriculture, the story is one of relentless consolidation. The federal government still subsidizes

church to the state legislature." Yet still he believes the backlash is misdirected, and he wryly observes that the moral problems persist—and show every sign of doing so for some time to come—even with Republicans in charge of every branch of the federal government. No matter how much power the Republicans and their allied business interests accrue, the myth persists that liberals are running the show—which only exacerbates the alienation felt by grassroots conservative Kansans.

All of this makes for bracing reading, and it's to Frank's credit that his prose style, animated, angry, and without guile, fits his material so well. His arguments feel more persuasive than they actually are. Frank provides little direct evidence, for example, of precisely how business interests are harming the working Kansan: there are suggestions and anecdotes, but little sustained argument. He simply assumes too much, and his assumptions are all predictably leftist. This blinkers him in other respects

[*Mercy, Mercy Me: The Art, Loves and Demons of Marvin Gaye, Michael Eric Dyson, Basic Books, 290 pages*]

Divided Soul

By R.J. Stove

“Biography is one of the new terrors of death.”

—John Arbuthnot (1667-1735)

MILLIONS OF US otherwise sane-looking fortyish Caucasian males spent our entire adolescence not just dazed with reverence for Marvin Gaye, but actively wishing we *were* Marvin Gaye. This unassuageable desire derived in part, to be candid, from certain Gaye ballads’ blatant appeal to rampageous teen hormones. (“Let’s Get It On,” though its lyrics use no word that could not be found in a stockbroker’s report, still ranks with the most obviously X-ratable songs of all time.) Yet Gaye’s more lasting appeal lay in his exceptional gift—which he never entirely lost—for making his art, and his three-octave vocal span, seem easy. The more he emoted, the less he sweated. He retained his panache even during the 1970s, when vast expanses of America’s musical terrain had undergone pitiless desertification by dreary singer-songwriters’ anti-rhetoric rhetoric. Compare Gaye’s “How Sweet It Is” with James Taylor’s cover version. Decades on, Gaye’s habitual gusto and buoyancy still please; Taylor, by contrast, turns this beguiling little daydream into the umpteenth torpid quarrel between his *Angst* and his adenoids.

So when the headlines screamed that Gaye had been shot dead on April Fools’ Day 1984 by his own father, we devotees felt in our guts a churning sensation that even now has not wholly ceased. Alas for us, Gaye’s death (unlike Elvis’s or John Lennon’s) inspired no sustained, cathartic outpouring of public sorrow: merely, after the first few days, an occasional freaks-of-the-week item on or

about page 5 of the tabloids, nestling between “Killer Cicada Plague” and “Aliens Stole Our Science Teacher.”

After 1984, of course, successive chroniclers’ revelations made it painfully obvious that Gaye could scarcely have constituted a worse role-model if he had taken up Russian roulette while operating a chainsaw. King of Motown he might have been—indeed, manifestly was—but over his inner demons, he had no sovereignty whatsoever. For sheer maniacal self-destructiveness, he made Kurt Cobain look like Kim Il-Sung. His torments first became public knowledge through *Divided Soul* (1991), by his former record producer David Ritz. Much later appeared Steve Turner’s *Trouble Man* (1998), Ben Edmonds’s *What’s Going On* (2001), and *Marvin Gaye, My Brother* by the late Frankie Gaye (2003), not to mention half a dozen examples of broader-ranging Motown historiography. Thus, the need for yet another volume on Gaye is less than blindingly evident—which has not stopped Michael Eric Dyson from supplying one.

Fresh from purveying book-length tributes to those great humanitarians Malcolm X and Tupac Shakur, Dyson—demonstrably seething at the “racism” of a society that accords him no loftier a post than a University of Pennsylvania

ghetto-speak for his every inter-office memorandum. Dyson’s predominant worldview is stranded in 1994: a gruesome throwback to the twilight zone of early Clintonism’s identity politics, before the faintest hint of Oklahoma City, Columbine, 9/11, and Iraq had forced on most American social engineers a smidgen of realism.

Admittedly, it could be worse. Dyson’s musical instincts are better than his ideological judgments, so that he exhibits considerable interest in—and enthusiasm for—Gaye’s early Motown hits. The music press’s standard attitude has long been blistering contempt for such hits (a *Washington Post* reviewer sneered last June at their “formulaic redundancy”), and by extension for Motown itself, a purportedly ruthless hit-machine combining the worst features of Procrustes and Uncle Tom. Dyson does manage to convey the free-wheeling—almost aleatoric—nature of Motown’s production processes, where immortal classics repeatedly emerged after just a handful of recorded takes, and where the boss Berry Gordy (whose sister Anna was Gaye’s first wife) showed endearing fallibility in predicting what would sell. Displaying a touchingly misguided solicitude for Middle American morals, Gordy at first felt thoroughly apprehensive about releasing

IT MUST BE DIFFICULT FOR THE **PC BRIGADE** TO IMAGINE THE CONCEPT OF A **BLACK HERO** WHO AVOIDED **HATING WHITEY**.

professorship—labors to reinvent the Soul Man as the Psychobabble Man. It must be difficult for the PC brigade to imagine the concept of a black hero who avoided hating whitey, but Dyson (a recent, querulous critic of Bill Cosby’s shrewd laments over the black underclass) seems unconcerned even with trying. The result, instead of explaining Gaye’s creative impulse, frequently evokes Herbert Kornfeld, that swaggering accountant familiar to *The Onion*’s readers, who employs cloacal

Gaye’s 1971 *What’s Going On?*; he feared that the album’s references to illicit substances and Indo-Chinese warfare would make it a financial flop. Gordy also assumed that Gaye’s subsequently issued duet album with Diana Ross would be a financial triumph; in fact it bombed. All of which shows the silliness of every attempt to divide Gaye’s work into a commercial sector (bad) and a self-consciously radicalized sector (good). *What’s Going On?*, for all its novelties, would have been unthink-

able except for Gaye's Motown heritage. This heritage helped to ensure that what in other hands could have been an inchoate, self-pitying whine had all the suppleness, vivacity, and tear-stained eloquence of other great Motown moments. "He curses life and makes you want to live." Those words are from Walter Lippmann on Mencken; they apply equally well to Gaye in *What's Going On?* mode.

Such exuberance impresses all the more given Gaye's lifelong battle against crippling depression. We who lack Gaye's stunning successes in the fame, fortune, and fornication departments may well experience a certain captious perplexity over what Gaye could have been depressed *about*. At least, until we ponder his horror-comic upbringing. He may have been, heaven help him, raped by an uncle. Certainly his Pentecostal clergyman father, Marvin Sr., had the disconcerting habit of strutting around his home in an evening gown and lipstick. Sometimes Marvin Sr. would alternate his transvestitism with his daily pummeling of Marvin Jr. (and all the latter's siblings); sometimes he would practice both hobbies in combination. Marvin Jr., remarkably weak-willed whenever outside a recording studio, lacked the courage to tell his parent. "Enough already with the lipstick" and to make a

new life with the help of an unlisted phone number. In orthography alone did Marvin Jr. rebel. The family's original surname had been Gay; Marvin Jr. added the extra "e" when his singing career began.

Otherwise his private life, far from transcending the morass of his nurture, resembled a shooting script for "Chinatown." Earlier biographers revealed that Marvin Jr.'s adopted son was in fact his real son by Anna Gordy's (then underage) niece. Dyson, in his portentous manner, calls Gaye's domestic situation "Afroedipalism [which] often rewrites the narrative of familial sexual competition," thus confirming that any problem, however ghastly, can always be made worse by Freud. (Gaye's freedom from Woody Allen style psychoanalytic kvetching—a freedom for which the proper response is surely pathetic gratitude—causes Dyson great woe: "It is too bad that Marvin was incapable of seeking out therapy.") Without the faintest suggestion of ironizing, Dyson also diagnoses Gaye as a victim of "post-traumatic slavery syndrome," and announces, "Father's masculine femininity colonized Mother's maternal space." Still, even this behavior has, we learn, redemptive potential: "If Father had not been abusive, his cross-dressing may have opened up marvelous pos-

sibilities for rethinking sexual identity."

After Gaye's first marriage ended in 1977, he agreed to give Anna a \$305,000 advance on his next album and the first \$295,000 from all royalties from the album—whereupon he deliberately made the recording (*Here, My Dear*) as unlikely to feature on the charts as possible. Like every other red-blooded American, he dreamed of waging a victorious guerrilla war against the IRS; when his defeat in this war loomed, he fled to (of all places) Belgium. Once back in the States, he continued the cocaine addiction that he boasted—almost certainly without truth—of having first indulged 20 years earlier. The drug, rather than being a long-term stimulant, soon aggravated his melancholy: so much powder, so few nostrils. By the early 1980s, half of Bolivia's gross national product must have been disappearing up Gaye's nose. (Incidentally, why are modern pop stars' extra-curricular sins so tiresomely repetitive? Drugs, booze, shagging, booze, shagging, drugs, drugs, shagging, booze Why cannot a few hitmakers cultivate some more original vices? Selling Ponzi schemes? Forging Shakespeare manuscripts? Printing bogus checks drawn on the Bank of Senegal?)

He finally broke with Motown altogether, and went to Columbia Records instead. There, in 1982, he scored his last and probably most aphrodisiac hit, "Sexual Healing." Some would argue that it might have been better for the world if this had never been released; but then, *fleurs du mal* are still *fleurs*. Baudelaire invocations are apposite because throughout his freefall Gaye somehow retained a certain religious sense. We must wonder what contentment he might have achieved had his brand of Christianity made the smallest intellectual demands on him, instead of being one self-lacerating shriek-fest after another.

Yet perhaps he would have met a bad end even if he had not quixotically given his father, as a present, the gun by which he perished. When an able-bodied male is so dependent as to be still living with his able-bodied parents at the age of 44,

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whatever befalls him will seldom prove agreeable. On the last day of his life, he revenged himself by thrashing his father as his father had so often thrashed him. A friend recollected: "I'll always believe Marvin was committing suicide. When you give somebody a gun, and then you beat him and you tell him, 'Well, hold on, rest up, I'll be back to beat you again in a little while.' That's suicidal." Marvin Sr. died in 1998, having served only five years' jail for the killing. (A mercifully apocryphal joke—which those too young to remember 7-inch vinyl discs may well find incomprehensible—had the revolver-wielding septuagenarian telling his son: "This is the last 45 you'll ever hear.")

Hard though it now is to contemplate Gaye's records without a shuddering awareness of Gaye's end, the effort can be made and, by anybody with the slightest taste for musical hedonism, should be. Dyson, when not peddling secondhand gossip about Gaye's alleged affair with colleague Tammi Terrell—a relationship that nearly everyone else believed to have been platonic—can write acutely on Gaye's artistic approaches when he wants to, even if his proofreaders have served him remarkably ill. (The short-lived 1970s singer Minnie Riperton becomes "Ripperton," and the celebrated Anglo-American poet turns into "T.S. Elliot.") Ultimately, though, the best way to appreciate Gaye's *oeuvre* is, surprise surprise, to hear it. To quote a particularly wistful Gaye-Terrell duet: "Ain't nothin' like the real thing, baby."

Chesterton—albeit disadvantaged as a Motownologist by having died in 1936, 23 years before Motown started—captured in two delightful sentences the charm that, it so happens, Motown's legacy possesses at even its softest-edged. "The silly old song," GKC wrote, "was sentimental, but it was also romantic. That is, it believed in itself and in the possibility of happiness; and happiness must always be taken seriously." ■

R.J. Stove writes from Melbourne, Australia.

[*The Bush Betrayal*, James Bovard, Palgrave-Macmillan, 330 pages]

New Era of Big Government

By Bob Barr

IF SOMEONE DESCRIBED for you a national incident involving unprecedented loss of life, poor government planning, the failure to hold any government official accountable for mistakes, and Congress responding to the crisis by throwing money at the problem, chances are you'd conclude they were speaking about the causes and aftermath of 9/11. Actually, they could just as well be describing the siege and invasion of the Branch Davidian Compound at Waco, Texas, in 1993, during President Bill Clinton's first term.

Now, if that same person were to ask you which recent president's term in office was characterized by support for the so-called assault weapon ban, a huge increase in deficit spending, bigger budgets for virtually every domestic program—including Americorps and the National Endowment for the Arts—and signing into law a massive increase in federal government regulation of political speech, whose administration would you suspect they were describing? That of Democrat Bill Clinton? Nope. They'd be talking about the first term of Republican President George W. Bush.

The fact is, the records of these two presidents, Democrat Bill Clinton and Republican George W. Bush, are much more alike than either man would likely feel comfortable admitting. With Bill Clinton, a record of Big Government and lack of accountability, which is precisely what we witnessed from 1993 to 2001, was pretty much what most of us expected; we got what we deserved when we elected him president. With George W. Bush, however, what we have gotten is not what we bargained for—that is if we hoped for a president committed, as Bush said he was during the

2000 campaign, to smaller and more accountable government. Has America been betrayed by President George W. Bush? In his most recent book, *The Bush Betrayal*, James Bovard poses and then answers this question with a resounding "yes."

Coming out as it does in the immediate aftermath of the extensive, if still incomplete, post-mortem of the 9/11 disaster, and while American troops and civilians are still dying in the dust of Iraq, there may be a tendency to minimize Bovard's book by considering it as simply an analysis of the Bush administration's sleight-of-hand in getting us involved with a war in Iraq. To be sure, the author does take the current administration to task for the basis on which the war in Iraq was predicated and on which it continues to be prosecuted; Bovard labels this Bush's "greatest abuse of power" (a characterization with which I disagree—not that it isn't an abuse of power, but it isn't the worst one).

The importance of Bovard's book, which, incidentally, follows and builds upon his outstanding 2003 volume, *Terrorism and Tyranny*, goes far beyond an analysis of the Iraqi War or even the response by this administration to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. The importance of *The Bush Betrayal* lies in the author's impeccably researched exposition of what may very well be the central theme underlying modern politics in America: despite promises, regardless of rhetoric, and irrespective of party label, once a politician is in power, what We the People get—and which we've got in the current administration—is, in Bovard's words, "Washington business as usual."

Bovard lays out a convincing case. With the thoroughly researched and footnoted style that has become his forte, and with the heavy doses of relevant anecdotes and dry humor that have become his trademarks, the author has compiled a virtual almanac of American political abuse. And while it's not a pretty picture he paints, we ignore Jim Bovard's work at the risk of being repeatedly seduced—"betrayed"—by the siren songs of presidential candidates of both parties.

Each administration, it seems, must have a central theme around which its policies and actions revolve, and which provides a constant excuse for or explanation of why it does what it does. Who can forget the constant invocations by the Clintons that whatever the former president or his administration did, it was “for the children”? For the current administration of George W. Bush, any program, policy, or power grab—domestic or foreign—is justified because it furthers the War on Terror. Both the current and the immediately past administrations have fallen back on this ploy whenever criticized or attacked for their actions. After all, rather than bother to defend their actions as consistent with a core philosophy, it is much easier simply to label critics as “extreme” by claiming that if they are opposed to something the president or his employees are doing or have done, then by definition those critics must be against children or don’t support fighting terrorism. Shibboleths make such handy shields.

It truly is amazing, when you stop to think about it—as Bovard in his latest book forces us to do—that virtually everything the Bush administration has done to expand government power or

tion because—you guessed it—it creates stronger communities, which in turn are essential to improving America’s ability to fight terrorism. Hallelujah, and pass the collection plate!

Foreign aid to corrupt regimes and bloated international bureaucracies is extolled because it helps fight terrorism abroad. Don’t mind the fact that some of the terrorists who succeeded on 9/11 came from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, two countries that have received more U.S. aid and business investments than all but a handful of other countries.

It is not only Americans as taxpayers who are being forced to accept a broad range of increases in federal spending as the price the Bush administration extracts for pursuing its policies. Americans as targets of federal law-enforcement power are being made to pay a heavy price as well. The powers of the federal government—and, indirectly, state and local government, which often emulate their federal big brother—to snoop, surveil, search, and secretly arrest people with no more “reasonable suspicion” than a vague notion of “preventing terrorism,” have reached not just unprecedented, but frightening levels. And James Bovard shines the

ble that it takes your breath away—was the president’s signing of the so-called Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act in 2003. James Bovard pulls no punches in laying out just how devastating to freedom this law—upheld in all its major parts by the Supreme Court, despite eloquent dissents by Justices Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia—truly is. Not only is the law deeply and fundamentally contrary to our constitutional liberties, but the president and Republican congressional leaders knew it was unconstitutional when they allowed it to be brought to the floor, voted on, and signed by a Republican president. Yet they did it anyway. In so doing, they betrayed us and the Constitution, and they did it in the full light of day.

To rub salt in the constitutional wounds the campaign law created, the Bush administration has cynically employed it in recent months in an effort to silence criticism of its policies.

Perhaps the clearest evidence of how detached this administration is from the constitutional underpinnings that used to hold presidents at arm’s length from near-absolute power is a quote unearthed by Bovard and included in the closing chapter of *The Bush Betrayal*. In April of this year, at a news conference, Bush described himself as “the ultimate decision-maker for this country.” As Bovard correctly notes, of course, Bush is at most the decision-maker for the executive branch of the government; the people are the ultimate decision-makers for America. Our Founding Fathers knew that. Generations of Americans understood that. Previous presidents recognized that. Sadly, that constitutionally based and historically sound perspective, which is the cornerstone of what America should stand for, appears not to be a component of the current administration’s thinking. And that is a betrayal. ■

Former Congressman Bob Barr (R-Ga., 1995-2003) is the author of The Meaning of Is: The Squandered Impeachment and Wasted Legacy of William Jefferson Clinton.

VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING THE **BUSH ADMINISTRATION** HAS DONE TO **EXPAND GOVERNMENT POWER** OR EXPENDITURES IS JUSTIFIED AS **BEING** **ESSENTIAL TO WINNING** “THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM.”

expenditures is justified as being essential to winning “the war against terrorism.” Propping up farmers through outdated and expensive subsidies? Helps fight terrorism. Subsidies to sugar producers in order to keep prices of American sugar uncompetitively high? Necessary to fight terrorism. Tobacco subsidies? Ditto. How about a plan to have the government pay the way for lower-income home buyers who haven’t been able to save the money or qualify for loans to make their own down payments? A ridiculous and economically disastrous program, to be sure, but it’s worth the price to the Bush administra-

light on them all. From Attorney General John Ashcroft’s notion of “ordered liberty,” to Solicitor General Ted Olson’s argument to the Supreme Court that virtually anything President Bush wants to do is justified on the basis of his self-defined and overarching “constitutional authority to protect the nation,” Bovard opens his readers’ eyes to the still ongoing expansion of federal power during this administration’s watch.

But to me, the most devastating act of the Bush administration—which constituted such a fundamental betrayal of the First Amendment’s guarantee of our freedom to speak, petition, and assem-

The Glory of Greece



ATHENS — By the time you read this you'll be as sick of the Olympics as I am of listening to John Kerry brag about his Vietnam heroics (Why is it

that only non-heroes talk about their exploits?), but here's a postscript on the Games.

Even if I say so myself, Greece wears the victor's laurels for having proved foreign press reports wrong, with Greek words such as "chaos" and "catastrophe" having been the norm for self-proclaimed experts of the Fourth Estate leading up to the Games. In fact it was the contrary, with one feeling the spirit of the original Games in the shadow of the Acropolis and of Olympia, where in 776 BC the first contests took place. Back in those halcyon days, we Greeks did not have busybodies from the media criticizing the host city and stereotyping us as last-minute achievers. Had there been such creatures, we would have unleashed Milo of Croton on them despite their blow-dry hairdos. (Milo was the greatest of all Olympic heroes, an unbeaten wrestler who did his weight-training by lifting an ox and whom the Greek army once, while outnumbered three to one, sent out in front dressed in a lionskin, carrying a knotty club and wearing his six Olympic wreaths. The enemy fled.)

The ancient Olympics created other legendary wrestling champions like Polydamas, who won the 93rd Games in 408 BC, and who for an encore—and probably a bit of cash—also fought and beat a lion, twice. As I said, those were the good old days, not the drug-addled, cash-corrupted, cesspit of hypocrisy that is the present-day spectacle. Athletes competed in five events, a program that hardly altered for more than a millennium. The most prestigious contest was chariot racing, with four-horse chariots vying in the Hippodrome.

The ancients justified their love of sport by claiming that it made their soldiers fighting fit. A foot race in armor was introduced at the 65th games in 520 BC. The other three events were running, wrestling, and the pentathlon, which included running and wrestling as well as the discus, the javelin, and jumping. In other words, the Games represented real life. No synchronized swimming, beach volleyball, women's softball (they say ballroom dancing is next), or such girly contests as Tae Kwan Do, a phony martial art that resembles touch football. (Contestants wear padding and score points by simply touching the adversary.)

Karate, needless to say, was left out because it resembles the original Pankration, which was reserved for tough guys only. A combination of boxing and wrestling, contestants often chose death rather than submission. The famous athlete Arrachion won his third Olympic medal posthumously because just as he expired he broke the toe of his opponent, who surrendered.

Cheating, such as when a runner started too soon, was not tolerated. Referees, or Hellanodikai, had the power to flog an athlete, and there was no appeal or other such modern nonsense. Victors were given a simple wreath of olive sprays and the statue and victory poem that would be created in their honor back home. They were considered to be blessed by the gods. No Coca-Cola endorsements, no cornflakes contracts, no Nike sponsorships. Only glory.

We Greeks pride ourselves for having given Western man his cultural foundation. The history of ancient Greek

thought is the story of man's intellectual progress. Homeric Greeks had no minds of their own—that is, they had no sense of being whole individual beings, regarding themselves as puppets whose strings were pulled by the gods. Then came Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Socrates and Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Pericles: we gave them to the world. Without Greece there would have been no Rome, only darkness—a world without laws, science, or rational thought. It is hard for me to describe the pride all Greeks feel for their heritage and now for these Olympic Games. Personally, I have been against the Olympics because of their crass commercialization and egregious doping, though I grew up hero-worshipping track and field athletes like Bob Mathias, Jesse Owens, and Emil Zatopek.

I actually saw my father run and win the 800 meters in the same stadium where the opening ceremony took place. My mother's oldest brother was Greek 400- and 110-meter hurdles champ, and he and my dad competed in the 1928 and 1932 Olympics. Both were straight out of *Chariots of Fire*, pure amateurs who ran for glory. In fact, the character who put champagne glasses on the hurdles in that film was based on the Marquis of Exeter, a good friend to both my dad and uncle.

Those days are gone for good, alas, but in Olympia last month, along the green valley in the northwest Peloponnese, the spirit of the Games lived on. Shaded by olive, pine, and poplar trees, scented by oregano and thyme, one could almost hear the ancients groan and strive for victory. The nadir of the Olympic Games was Atlanta, where greed, corruption, and commercialism reached their peak. The high point was Athens, when the Games finally came back where they belong. ■

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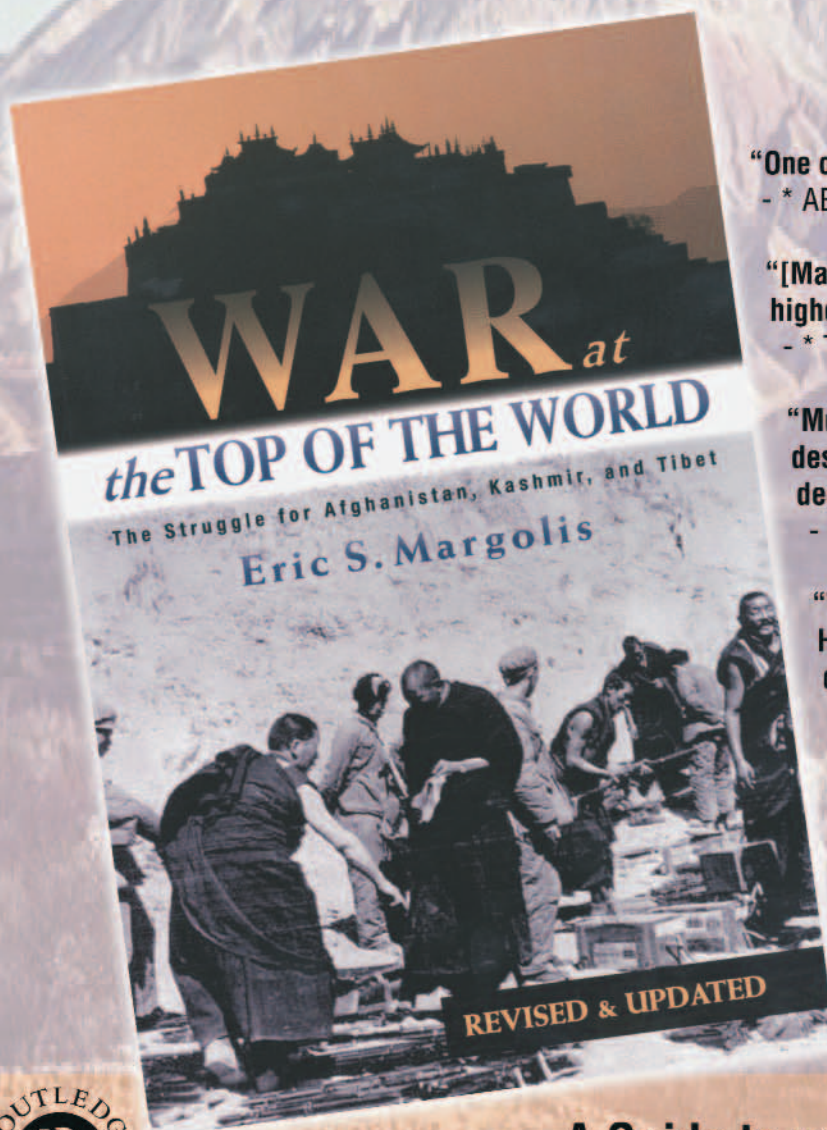
WAR

at the TOP OF THE WORLD

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